

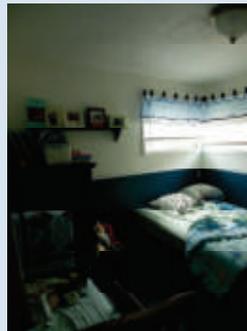
THE 6 OF THE MOST EXPENSIVE RESIDENTIAL REMODELING MISTAKES & HOW TO AVOID THEM



UNINSULATED FLOORS



POOR BEAM SUPPORTS



WINDOW CODE ISSUES



VARIABLE RISERS

Well, you are finally ready to begin that all important Remodeling Project you have been contemplating for several months or more. Hmmm! "Where to begin?", "What should I look for, when working on this Project?" - Wow, remodeling isn't cheap!

That is why we have assembled together this brief list of the most common and expensive mistakes in home remodeling with a few tips to help you avoid them throughout your research in starting your project. Let's see if you find a few that are familiar so far?

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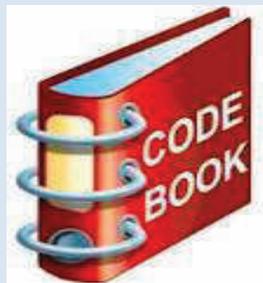
1. BAD DESIGN

In a remodeling project, by far, the most expensive mistake to forge ahead with is a Bad Design. This error can cost you a fortune and we have seen it many times from the start or later when it's time to renovate. Poorly designed additions (or as most think "tack ons"). They appear as afterthoughts and do not blend in to the homes architectural charm.

A bad design may actually degrade the home's value rather than increase it in a way you would prefer as a sizeable investment. The ramification falls to the danger of costing tens of thousands of dollars to complete, but also creating a major road-block to sell that largest and most prominent investment which places "Bad Design" at the top of our list.

What You Can Do

We recommend very highly to focus on the design. Especially, prior to worrying about things such as "who will build this?" and "when will this get finished?". You should spend a reasonable amount of time on the design and talk with a licensed Residential Architect to get a better feeling for what your options are, not only in design for the remodeling to the home, but its functioning and traffic requirements so you may feel comfortable in the space and its location on the site. Many times it is helpful to find an Architect who is familiar with the builders and construction community, and may bring one on board to discuss budgeting and acquire input for the projects final design.



2. SKIPPING AND/OR IGNORING THE ZONING CODES

Building and Zoning Codes vary generally in every Municipality throughout each state across the USA, and while most routine maintenance repairs don't require permits, remodeling and renovation changes, structural repairs and additions often do.



The temptation for owners and sometimes contractors lean towards: "Can't we just skip the permit on this one?" The true answer is no! Circumventing this process is never worth the aggravation nor worth the outcome. If the project is simple, the process will most likely be simple too. If the job is more extensive, the permitting process will help you be positively sure you are not making some very expensive mistake. Proceeding without the required permits could result in fines, delays, problems selling your home or worse, having to demolish and redo that hard earned investment project. The permit process also compares your final plans with the building code to be sure important health, safety and welfare concerns are being addressed in the design.

What You Can Do

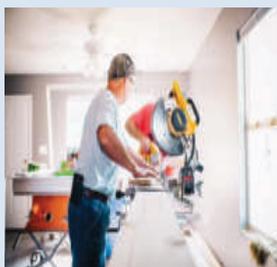
When hiring your contractor or even if you do the project yourself (DIY), insist that all work on your home be properly permitted through the local building department. If you are told something doesn't require a permit, call and verify, just to follow up and check with the proper

authorities. Many municipalities do allow minor things like painting, flooring, countertops, even just removing a window and replacing with an exact size unit, without a permit. However structural changes like removing and replacing headers over windows will require, generally, a permit. Other places or municipalities could require a permit to change a doorknob, so take the time to find out. Also be sure you are in the right jurisdiction such as a town or city.

Generally speaking, if your city, hamlet or town has a police and fire department, it is most likely that it has a building department. Please go get your permits!

3. WEARING TOO MANY HATS AND UNSURE OF YOUR DIY LIMITS TO CUT CORNERS AND COSTS

Home improvement shows seem to glorify a successful remodeling project without saying much about what goes on behind the scenes and giving a true idea of what the project entails when doing it yourself. It implies that you are saving money while giving you a huge sense of accomplishment. The truth that comes out in the end is, the cost to hire someone may be less than what your lost time (night and day) is worth, and besides if you do a poor job,



you'll need a Professional to fix your mistakes.

When a homeowner decides to act as his or her general contractor, another scenario is having the skills to do all the work but not the time. Between designing and providing the plans for permits and constructing the remodel project, juggling a full-time job and a large (or small) remodeling project



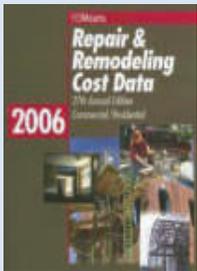
can be daunting and overwhelming, even when you have a team of professionals working for you. At times it can be completely impossible if you're trying to be the jack of all trades and do it yourself. In the long-run all intended savings evaporate because mistakes get made, things take up to twice as long, expenses add up and the project lingers on far beyond the plans to finish and make the space useful to the family.

What You Can Do

Don't overload your plate! If you're working full time, just be realistic about how many all-nighters and working weekends you can handle. For most people in their early years, anything more than a 3-4 day week stretch is going to lead to a meltdown and most likely family problems (its known to happen many times). Most large projects take longer than that, especially when you're working in your spare time (if you have any). Please consider how much it really costs to hire a team of professionals to help you, such as a reputable Residential Architect and a highly recommended General Contractor. Understand, an Architect can work with you to help you save money that will offset the fees that you will pay for the design and plans to be developed. Ask him to explain more in detail prior to hiring him/her. If the costs of hiring a professional pushes your project out of your budget, consider cutting back on the project scope and potentially constructing your project in phases. Just be aware of inflation and construction costs go up every year.

4. FAILING TO PREPARE A REALISTIC BUDGET

Remodeling is not cheap and at times is a complete surprise and can make you sit down. It always costs more than you expect, especially when you are not prepared for all the things that might go wrong or what is really involved with that final number. Consulting with a professional before starting the design will help you plan for any contingencies and account for unexpected items



like a buried structural issue that most always presents itself or the home has to be brought up to code entirely.

Older homes and/or larger projects are more likely to hide hidden expenses, as are jobs involving plumbing, electrical, heating or other work that is hidden behind walls and ceilings. There could be mold, leaks, corroded pipes, asbestos, insect infestation or fire hazards. Even the best contractor or architect can't always identify these potential problems until a project begins, so don't assume the contract's cost is what you are going to pay. It is always appropriate to expect to spend 10% to 15% beyond your contract amount, just to handle some of these unexpected hidden surprises. If you don't feel you can afford the higher, more realistic price, scale back the scope, rethink what is actually needed and curb your wants (they are two different things), downgrade the materials or keep saving for that project.

The image is a screenshot of a software application, likely a budgeting or project management tool. It displays a table with multiple columns, including "Item", "Description", "Quantity", "Unit", "Price", and "Total". The table is filled with various line items, some of which are highlighted in yellow and blue. The interface includes a menu bar at the top and a toolbar with various icons.

One of the most expensive mistakes in remodeling is a budget that's too low. The need to save money sometimes leads to so many bad choices and almost always sets you back on your heels. Having a budget that is more than sufficient has the opposite result. Good choices with your licensed professional are made, good materials are specified, a great design is prioritized and the finished product ends up being significantly more valuable and, as odd as it would seem, often costing far less to complete.

Any changes to a job once it is underway should be added to your written contract (change order) and described in the same detail as the original work. Never give a contractor free reign over the budget and seriously consider working with your architect to help administrate the construction of your project so you both may keep progress reports on the project at hand and be sure it gets constructed as per your vision you both had agreed on in the first place.

What You Can Do

It is important that the scope of the work and the right monetary budget match. If the expenditures seem short there at least three options; get a loan, reduce the scope and wants (not the needs), or wait.

Home Improvement loans or Lines of Credit can be a great thing and sometimes they are a perfect safety net if your budget is close. At times phasing the work in stages and reducing the scope of the initial project is another solution. And, of course, there's always the option to just relax and wait for another year to save up a few more greenbacks before starting.

Whatever choice you end up doing, the real key to not making costly mistakes in a remodeling project is having the budget available to do it right the first time.

5. NOT USING A LICENSED ARCHITECT

If you prefer your remodeling project to meet your expectations to its fullest and have that professional appearance and cosmetic appeal to fit in with the areas architecture while blending into your homes character, distinctiveness and its personality. You need to work with a



before

Licensed Residential Architect to design your dream project as well as a reputable General Contractor to construct your vision. Contractors are not, generally designers; they are “**builders**”. You will need a carefully defined and thought out idea to produce a dream home to get your aesthetically



after

pleasing, functional and lasting solution to a problem, started. The training and skill set for these two professions is tremendously different but fall closely together in the field of construction. Experience tells us that successful residential remodeling projects – those that achieve the desired results for owners, families, and architects – result from informed clients working with skilled architects to form professional, business, and often personal relationships. These relationships are formed by clear communication, mutually understood expectations, and a willingness of both client and architect to understand and accept their responsibilities for realizing a successful design for a remodeling project.

Building in today’s marketplace is a complex undertaking requiring knowledge of products and materials, zoning and code issues, technical questions and support and familiarity with the construction and build environment.

Your architect understands these complexities and works with you to design an appropriate and winning response to your vision and requirements. In turn, he/she works in your interest within the construction industry and can help you greatly to transform that dream project into a **home**.



What You Can Do

A good architect will design you a home that will not just fit you today, but for when you get married, have a child or two, or grow old. Or they will add value to your home so that when it is sold, you can afford something bigger. This, is design worth paying for, design that will save, and make, you money. Most importantly, unlike builders or other tradesmen, to be an architect is to be bound by the Architectural Registration Board Code of Conduct, which means acting with honesty,

integrity, trustworthiness and to look after your clients' expenditures.

*Your Licensed Professional Architect is the only building design professional, who is qualified with an extensive educational background, properly acquired internships, rigorous licensing examinations, years of exhaustive practical experience, at times hands-on, and continuous educational career requirements, that has the training, background and knowledge, building design expertise, the ability to visualize a design of your home inside and out, its addition, remodeling of all types and styles, and whom is budget minded, energy conscious, looks out for your interests and needs, deals with the construction industry every-day, and guides you through construction to make that house a **home** or a building to function, work and play in, that will really work.*

If you are interested in finding out more about what an architect can do for you, just visit our web site at www.babarchitecturalservices.com We encourage you to follow up for a consult with a licensed architect for that future residential project, even if it is another firm. I am sure it will be the right beginning to a rewarding conclusion for your new project you've been considering for months or years.



6. CHOOSING YOUR CONTRACTOR BASED JUST ON PRICE

It's understandable that you would want to choose a contractor who gives you the lowest price or bid. With your design and plans already completed, aren't you just hiring someone to perform the labor? "Homeowners look at price as the primary differentiator and tend to assume that



everyone will provide the same quality, level of service and workmanship, turnaround time and the same set of specifications". But, have no idea if you are comparing price for a similar scope of work unless you give a detailed list of your project specifications with plans to each perspective contractor.

Your specifications should include the following:

- *Project Summary*
- *Architect's Plans (Basic)*
- *Product requirements on a room by room basis*
- *Electrical fixture requirements*
- *Plumbing fixture requirements*



- *Start and Finish dates*
- *Details for each trade: For example, a paint job should specify the paint grade, texture, number of coats, primer, and color.*
- *Special parameters: It's important to let contractor's know about factors that might complicate the project, such as no smoking on the premises, toilet facility requirements, or a family member with asthma or the homeowner's association covenant limits work hours during certain days.*

To assume contractors all do the same thing is a wrong assumption. The same quality means that the contractor needs to care tremendously about his finished work and only wants to perform his best, which in many cases brings up concerns. The level of service and their workmanship can be screened and compared by careful notice of work performed elsewhere by recommendation. The turnaround time may vary completely based on how many of his crew is on site working on your project? The specifications are critical to acquire closer bids and Basic Construction drawings with generic specifications are not enough to get competitive pricing.

What You Can Do

We recommend that you ask for references and to be able to see some sample projects that the contractor has completed or at least be able to contact the references to ask questions oriented around quality, workmanship, timing, punctuality, personality and site cleaning ethics.

If you have contracted for your architect to complete only Basic Construction drawings, presenting generic specifications (based on price), then the detailed Specifications will need to be presented by you to include the information noted. This information has to be presented to each contractor that you want a bid from so they will be able to price apples to apples for your dream project.

As an alternative at the start of design, you hire your licensed architect to complete a highly detailed and Full Contract Document set of plans including a complete set of Specifications and Bid Documents that reflects your needs for the project. These detailed plans and specifications are used for keeping the bids closer and tighter based on content and uniformity for bidding the project. If you would like to discuss the process and why, call an architect of your choice or visit our web site noted below and click on "Ask The Architect" in our free educational resources.

We hope this guide will help you in your endeavors to begin your project and start you on a positive journey to a rewarding conclusion!

We encourage you to begin by visiting our web site at www.baparchitecturalservices.com and click on our free educational resources!

-Thank You-

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