

Where to Begin?

Are you nervous about taking on a large remodeling project? Have no idea where to begin? Consider these four key items below, and get yourself started on the right path.

- 1) Why are you remodeling? Do you want to add space, reconfigure the space you have, just update the look and feel, repurpose a room, or make your home more energy efficient?
 - a. What are your options? Is there room to expand into the back/front yard or is there enough room to redesign using the existing floor space? What local building codes and/or neighborhood regulations could affect your plans.
 - b. Set priorities. Create a “must have”, and “nice to have” list.
 - c. Consult the whole family; get input from everyone who will be using the new space.
 - d. Consider short-term and long-term implications of your renovation decisions. Will your family size change in the future? How long do you plan to live in this house; and will your choices increase or decrease the home’s resale value?
- 2) Collect ideas and information
 - a. Look at magazines and tear out pictures that appeal to you. Find a local tour of homes and take your camera along. If you have friends, whose homes you enjoy, take your camera next time you visit and snap some photos.
 - b. Aggregate all these clips into one folder – it doesn’t have to flow or make sense at this point, but save everything and let a designer help you shape the vision later.
 - c. Go to a local home and garden show and check out displays of products
 - d. Visit supplier show rooms, especially those that have matched up rooms, that can help you get ideas for your new space.
- 3) Determine your budget
 - a. What is the maximum amount of money you are willing to spend? What is your ideal budget?
 - b. How will you finance it? How much are you willing/able to borrow?

- c. What makes sense, given the neighborhood and your ability to recoup your investment down the road?
- 4) Find a qualified renovation team
 - a. Look for a professional team that handles their business in a highly polished, organized manner
 - b. Look for a well credentialed team. Are they a Certified Remodeler and/or a Graduate Master Builder?
 - c. Are they insured?
 - d. Do they communicate well?
 - e. Are they going to be around for the long haul, to warrant their current work, and serve you in the future? Are they investing in their business?
 - f. Engage them early, they should be a resource during design and pricing, and will help keep you on track and schedule.

It's that simple - set goals, gather your ideas, set a budget and find a qualified renovation company. Try not to forget that you are investing in what may be your family's most valuable asset.