

Avoiding the Ups and Downs of Remodeling

What can you expect when you decide to remodel?

Remodeling is like a roller coaster; one minute you're up, the next you're down. You're excited that your dreams are coming true. You're worried that the money you spend won't be worth it. You feel energized because things are moving along on schedule. You feel weary because it's only been a month and you're already tired of people coming in and out of your home. AAHH!! The pain and the pleasure--the agony and the ecstasy--of remodeling.

Picture yourself in line at a popular amusement park waiting for a ride that comes highly recommended. You know it has twists and turns. You want to do it, but you're anxious. Then you remember that you have already heard what the ride is like. You know what to expect, so you hop on board and when it's over you're thrilled. Remodeling is like that roller coaster ride: if you know what to expect, the experience can go from being scary to being exhilarating.

There are three major areas of remodeling usually associated with unrealistic expectations which can make your remodeling ride terrifying: **time, cost and stress**.

The first area is **time**. You have dreamed about this project for how long? A long time, I'm sure. Most people start thinking about a project two years before the building actually begins. Everything takes time. The plans take time; architects typically take anywhere from 3 to 4 months. The building departments all vary, but the approval and permitting process is typically 1 month for a small job and 3 months for a larger project. Interviewing contractors, seeing their work and calling their references takes time. Picking out the materials is always overwhelming; there are so many choices (tile, flooring, cabinets, windows, etc.). Whether your project is big or small, you will have a lot of decisions to make. The actual construction process takes time. Depending on the size of the remodel, an average bathroom could take from 4 to 12 weeks, an addition 5 to 9 months, a whole house remodel anywhere from 6 months to over a year. There may be unexpected delays due to weather, shipping mistakes or decision changes. **The actual construction process may be longer than you would think or like.**

The second area is **cost**. You have an idea of how much your remodeling project should cost, right? A friend told you they had their project done for \$100 per square foot, the architect said it should be around X amount of dollars, the shows on TV get a lot more done for less money than your quote. The reality of remodeling is that there are so many variables and differences per house that a generic per square foot price doesn't work and the architects (though knowledgeable in their field) aren't builders who understand the actual process and price of building. While TV shows are great for their entertainment value, they don't portray a realistic side of the cost. They have many companies donating products, which helps the bottom line for the show. Also, prices can vary significantly in different regions of the country.

The best way to realistically plan your budget is to bring in the financial institution, the architect or designer and the builder. Together you can all work from start to finish, to ensure that what is drawn can actually be built for a price you can afford. You may not get everything you wish for, but these professionals will help you negotiate your needs,

wants and wishes so you will get most of what you desire at a price you determine to be realistic for your budget. **The actual cost of a remodeling project may be more than you would think or like.**

The last area is **stress**. You know that remodeling will be a stressful process; everyone has told you. You're prepared. You're going to move out. You're going to have meals frozen for six months. Everyone will live with just one shower. The fact is, you will survive! You could feel out of control at times, you may worry about finances, you may not agree with your spouse on some issues and you will be tired. Tired of people coming in and out of your house. Tired of dust and plastic barriers. Tired of washing dishes in the bathtub. You may get upset about things that are or are not happening on your project. It's OK. **The actual stress of a remodeling project may be more than you would think or like.**

As contractors, we know how hard remodeling is emotionally, and we expect you may need to blow off steam. It's not taken personally. Building professionals understand how intrusive this process is and will handle whatever needs to be taken care of for you, to get your project done.

The good news is you will also be happy. Happy when we begin construction and your dream is coming true. Happy when you see the tile, paint and flooring going in and it looks as great as you had imagined. Happy when we leave and there are no longer workers going in and out of your house and your home is a sanctuary again. Usually, in two to three months after your project is completed, when you're relaxing in your beautiful space on a warm Friday evening, you will be thrilled that you made the decision to remodel.

AAHH!! The agony and the ecstasy, the ups and the downs, the roller coaster of remodeling! By knowing what to expect, you can turn your next remodeling project from a wild ride that is overwhelming to one that, though it may have twists and turns, is exhilarating and rewarding.

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