



DESIGNER CHECKLIST FOR RENOVATION

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During our long history as an Interior Design firm, I have run into several people that want to know the procedures for a renovation - where do I start; what should I expect? For each renovation project we undertake, our systematic approach varies according to the specific area being renovated, whether it be a full house renovation, a basement, or single areas of the house. Our checklists are very precise depending on the area it pertains to and are very client specific. No checklist is the same.

PHOTOGRAPH BY DUALITY PHOTOGRAPHIC

What we will attempt is to provide a general checklist to help you through your renovation journey.

✓ Family discussion

Discuss the renovation with the family as a whole as the renovation journey will involve everyone. Decide on what area you are going to renovate. Decide on how it will affect the rest of the areas in the home. Will there be more renovation in the future and how will that affect the current renovation?

✓ Build an idea file

Develop a collection of looks that appeal

to you. Use magazines, websites, paint samples, anything that expresses who you are and reflects your personal taste. Don't limit yourself because of budget at this point. Let your imagination flow!

✓ Take a closer look

Look at how you and your family use the space. Note your traffic patterns and what you need to maximize the use of the space. Question everything. Write your findings down and discuss them with your family. Rate them from most important to the space to least important.

Now is the time to get an interior designer involved. Or, for the 'do-it-yourselfers' - follow the outline below.

✓ Measuring up

We will measure the floor area, where existing walls are, locate all existing electrical, window locations and exits and entrances to 1/16th of an inch. We then take the ceiling heights and locate the window heights from the floor and the ceiling. This is the most critical point in the renovation process to get right. All the drawings from this point on are based on these measures. Sometimes measures need to be reconfirmed for that reason.

✓ Get the layout

Once the measures are taken of the existing space, it is time to put those measures into a scalable drawing. We usually use the Computer Aided Design (CAD) program with the scale of 1/4" = to one foot. You can use 1/4" graph paper or purchase a scale at your local art store. Or, find your own program on the internet. This way we have a manageable size drawing to create a new layout. Also, if you use this scale and you need a little help from a designer, the scale is easily translatable for a designer to sketch on.

✓ I gotta have!

The next step may surprise you. You need to make a list of any appliances, plumbing and any specific items you want in the space and select them. Yes, before you even have a new plan! These items will

affect the budget and determine what you are willing to spend. So much time is wasted when these items are not planned for ahead of making a plan! A 48" fridge will change a kitchen layout dramatically.

✓ Set a budget

Once you have priced out your specific items, it is important to create the budget for the renovation. Money is always the deciding factor on how close to your dream you are going to come.

✓ Create a plan

A plan is then built on the specific item selections you have made, your budget and your wish list. Start with the most important items and put them to the scale of 1/4" = 1'. You can cut them out of paper and label them so it is easier to move them around or use a program from the internet to place them in the drawing where you would like to see them. You will then be able to see what will fit and what will not.

✓ Shed a little light on it

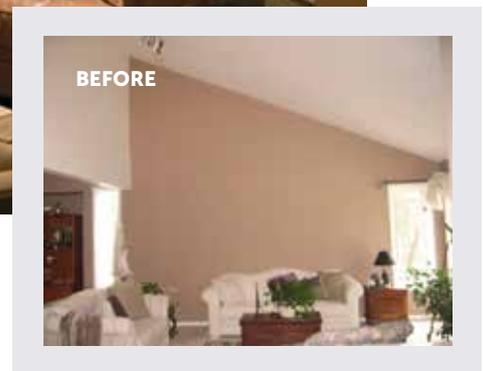
Don't forget lighting and electrical. Think about the amount of light and receptacles you will need for all tasks that will be performed in the space and allow for some ambient lighting to create interest.

✓ Finish up!

Once you have come up with a plan you are happy with, it is time to select the finishes. Make a list of all the materials you need to select based on your plan. Take your plan with you wherever you go. Salespeople will be able to help you much better when you can refer to a plan.

✓ Contact the contractor

Once you have selected all your appliances, plumbing, lighting, materials and have them written down it is time to call a contractor to look at your space. I always recommend that you interview two or three companies for your project. But, when the final bids come in don't just turn to the last page and compare the various totals to each other. The highest



bid is often the most realistic projection of costs, and may include necessary budget items that other lower-priced bids missed.

✓ **Compare businesses**

Remember that once you hire your contractor they are going to be all up in your life! They will often be the first people you see each morning, so, be sure that you're comfortable with the idea of them being in your home. Ensure that you're able to meet with the foreman for your project. He, or she, is going to be your point-person so make sure you both have a good connection.

✓ **Discuss the money**

Make sure you have a very clear understanding about how payments are made and how your funds are being applied to the project. You should have every expectation to see incredibly transparent financial documents as your project proceeds. Ask for a sample invoice.

✓ **Keep good records**

Make sure you keep all project

specifications and signed contracts on file. Check references carefully and make sure your contractor is bonded and insured and has pulled the required permits.

✓ **Project start**

Finally, you have decided on a contractor and are anxious to get started. Although many people find it difficult to bridle the contractor's hammer, try to hold off on any demolition until after you have availability confirmation of all of your selected products. Sometimes a product is delayed and you will be living in mess for much longer than you need to.

✓ **Ride the wave of construction**

You need to expect your project to vacillate both in timeline and costs. You certainly have every right and expectation for your project to move smoothly, on schedule, and on budget, but, there are often factors that no one has control over, so you also need to be reasonable about any delays or changes that might arise.

✓ **Get a professional's point of view**

If at any point in your renovation journey that you feel unsure or off track, hire an interior designer to help you with your ideas and the evaluation you have made with your renovation. We have the experience to answer your design and technical questions and help you make your dream renovation a reality!



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