

Think About Remodeling? Talk to a Contractor and a Real Estate Agent First

In today's financial climate, many people are choosing to remodel their home instead of moving to a bigger house. The decision to call in a contractor and start making changes should be made only after plenty of discussions with your family - remodeling can cause major disruptions in your living space, and can be stressful if things don't go as quickly as planned. Any remodeling job will be stressful for the family, and if most of your remodeling is exterior work then it is always advisable to let any neighbors know they may have to put up with some noise and mess for a while, too. The decision to remodel may come from a desire for more space or convenience, or because it is assumed that the improvements will bring a profit when the house is sold. Most people assume that they'll get both benefits, but many remodeling jobs don't actually pay for themselves in an increased home value. If you are making changes simply to make your home more comfortable for you and your family, you may not be worried about getting your money back. However, if you intend to sell the home in the next few years, there are two people you should talk to first - a good local contractor, and a good real estate agent. A common mistake home owners make is assuming that when they sell they will get back the money they invest in any improvements they have made to their home. This is not always the case, especially in a volatile real estate market. Some remodeling projects return most of the investment, while others may help the house sell faster, but do not increase its resale value. Your contractor will let you know how much your dreams will cost, and your real estate agent can let you know if the cost will be returned if you sell. Some general ideas about cost can be determined by doing some Internet research, but the cost will vary from area to area. A contractor in Michigan will give you a different estimate than you would get if you lived in California. The first step should really be to call in a contractor who will make suggestions on materials and styles. As the costs of materials will take the largest chunk out of the budget, this is the area where most of the compromises will need to be made. Most contractors will be able to give you ideas about how to reduce the costs, perhaps by scaling back the size of an addition, or by finding less expensive materials, or even by doing some of the work yourself. The excitement of your ideas can be dampened once the cost has been looked at more closely and often compromises have to be made in order to complete the task. Are you going to do most of the work yourself? Then you'll need to make your own materials estimates, which may be more difficult than you first imagine. Mistakes at this stage can be costly. Before you begin to tear out walls or dig up the back yard, go to the store make a list with exactly what you need for each project, and determine exactly what it will cost. Be sure you've taken careful measurements, so you know exactly how much material you'll need before you head to the store. If you do get help from a contractor, you have choices about how much work he'll do, and how much you'll do yourself. There are those who like to carry out as much of the work as possible but will still employ the services of a contractor to consult and ensure the plans are sound. It is not uncommon for contractors to employ outside workers to carry out certain sections of a project if it is something that they are unfamiliar with. There are other occasions where a contractor is himself only called in to complete certain stages the homeowner is uncomfortable with.

About the Author

If you're thinking about remodeling this year, you can find a qualified independent contractor at <http://www.find-concrete-contractors.com/>

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