

COUNTDOWN TO RENOVATIONS

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If you're one of the 70 per cent of Canadian homeowners who plan to renovate your home over the next year, you'll be pleased to learn that this is a perfect time to prepare for a successful 2010 project. Paying attention to the seasonal demands can give you a unique opportunity to assess your needs from a truly hands on perspective. Understanding how you function best in your space is an important step for creating homes that feel good.

Whether you want to improve your lifestyle with altered space or protect your investment with efficient upgrades, large or small, all renovations demand a special kind of tolerance. Remodeling demands a new level of awareness and patience, particularly if you are choosing to live in your home during the process. Privacy is often compromised and undoubtedly, you will be inconvenienced more often than you might imagine. However, for those who can weather the challenges, the rewards can be outstanding. The key to achieving your dream home will be careful advanced planning and management. Here are some guidelines.

STEP 1 – Get Real

Clearly Define Your Objectives And Budget Expectations

Get clear about what you want to achieve with your reno in terms of outcome and the real dollars you have to invest. This will help you and your team focus on achievable goals to ensure a high degree of success.

STEP 2 – Create Your Plan

Consult Professionals – Be Informed From The Start

Your home is comprised of an interconnected network of systems that work together, many of which are inconveniently out of eyesight. A qualified designer and contractor will work together to help you assess your situation and plan your project based upon your existing structure, consulting with additional professionals as required to create your plan. Take the time to explore options and ensure that you are comfortable with the final plans. Changes are easy to make on paper.

STEP 3 – Prepare A Budget Based On Your Plan

(Make sure your funding is in place.)

You will need two budgets: one for contractor labour and materials and one for finishing materials. This is a bit of a “chicken and egg” situation since product choice will greatly impact cost. The most important objective is to ensure that product selections provide the best performance over time while fitting into your budget. Your design professional can be invaluable. You don't need to make the actual product selections at this time, but you need to know the categories and price range you will be selecting from. Make allowances for flooring, cabinetry, bathroom fixtures etc., based on your expectations.

STEP 4 – Plan For The Unexpected

While your contractor may be able to assess and predict potential problem areas, without an x-ray camera there's no way to know for sure what treasures wait to be discovered once tear-out begins. It's wise to prepare for the unexpected with a contingency budget of 10 to 20 per cent, especially in older homes where plumbing and electrical may need to be upgraded.

STEP 5 – Preparation Of Permit Application & Drawings – And Contractor Insurance Documents

Depending upon the size and scope of your project, the permit process after application can take anywhere from two to six weeks. In the meantime you will need to make sure your design and contractor team has proper proof of insurance.

STEP 6 – Select And Confirm Specialty Contractors

Kitchen, Bathrooms and Other Cabinetry

Select specialty suppliers, choose appliances, confirm design choices and book deliveries. Kitchens usually require five to six weeks lead-time for production. Immediately choose countertops, sinks, faucets and accessories.

STEP 7 – Finalize All Finishing Materials And Supplies

Make final product selections and check availability of supply and delivery times to ensure they arrive when required.

