

Ten things you need to know before you REMODEL...

1. Be sure your neighborhood will support your investment.
Remodeling will increase the value of your home. The question is, “Will that value be in keeping with the comparables in your area?” If not, and you overbuild, are you willing to make a long-term commitment to reside in your home until values catch up?
2. Pre-qualify yourself for the anticipated scope of the remodel.
Talk to your financial institution about the best means to finance your project. Though form follows function, scope follows budget.
3. Do a thorough analysis of the site and home.
Consider your existing home and site now. Views, traffic flow, sun angles, wind aspects, privacy, etc. Write down what works and doesn't work in your home environment.
4. Begin collecting ideas you'd like to see in your home.
This includes photos, websites, samples, textures, colors, relationships, proportions, etc. Good remodeling architecture is a marix of the old and the new, the present and the future, and the locale of your home.
5. Develop a Master Plan.
A good master plan for the project ensures proper usage of resources, proper placement of infrastructure and structure, documentation of your vision, and ability to build the vision in phases, if necessary.
6. Start with the ideal, backoff to the reality.
In the planning stages, begin with the ideal. If money were no object, what would you like, within reason? Then, as the ideas become plans, you adapt them to your budget.
7. Be prepared for your comfort zone to be expanded.
Remodeling is messy business. Be ready for it. If possible, on larger remodels, consider moving out for a time while the dirty work is being done. This will reduce your stress and give you a mini-vacation in the

midst of your remodel. Be sure the contractor takes extra steps to control noise, dust, access issues, etc.

8. Keep track of the budget.

As each phase of the project progresses reassess how the budget is going. Make adjustments as necessary. Be careful in the finish stages; this is where many budgets go over.

9. Communicate adjustments as soon as you can.

If you see something in the process of the remodel that doesn't seem quite right, speak up and seek clarification. It's your house, be sure it's done to your satisfaction. If your contract needs adjustment, called a change order, then process a written change order to make the adjustment.

10. Enjoy the process.

This is your house; it's being transferred into your home. Enjoy the moment. Take pictures. Consider a project journal to record thoughts and impressions as a keepsake for the family.