



How to Avoid Home Remodeling Nightmares

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It seems as though everyone has a friend or relative with a home remodeling horror story. From shoddy workmanship to contractors who disappear in the middle of a project, remodeling nightmares seem to be all too common.

But it doesn't have to be that way! The home remodel experience should be fun and rewarding, not stressful. After all, you are creating spaces that meet your family's needs and lifestyle, which should be a source of happiness. By asking a few questions upfront, you can find the right remodeling contractor and have a smooth experience.

Here are four common home remodeling nightmares—and how to avoid them.

1. THE MIA CONTRACTOR

One of the worst feelings when going through a renovation is having a contractor who doesn't communicate. If you constantly need to chase your builder to get answers—or if your builder disappears in the middle of a project—that's a problem. Not only is he neglecting his responsibilities but, without someone supervising the subcontractors, some of the work could end up being completed incorrectly. To avoid this situation, be sure to do your research upfront. It's surprising how many remodelers aren't who they say they are. Read reviews and view references for your prospective builder. Before you make any hiring decisions, get firm answers to the following questions:

- What is the schedule for completing this project?
- Who will be here every day?
- How will we communicate, and how often?
- How do you handle change orders?
- When will we need to meet during the project?

2. THE PICKUP TRUCK CONTRACTOR

Many of the renovation horror stories we hear have to do with “pickup truck contractors.” Homeowners hire a jack-of-all-trades to complete their remodel, instead of a trusted builder with professional subcontractors, looking forward to a lower cost and a simplified process. But in reality, these types of remodelers often don't have the trade or time management skills to complete the job properly under deadline.

3. THE DIY HOMEOWNER

The biggest nightmare often happens when a homeowner starts the project on their own without a permit or a plan. They try to hire all of the sub-contractors themselves without hiring a builder. They attempt to manage the project themselves. But, because they don't have the right experience, a homeowner will usually spend more time and money in the end if they choose this route. They typically realize too late that they need a professional to take over and finish the job correctly.

This home remodeling nightmare is easy to avoid. Simply hire a professional remodeling contractor from the start. While you may think you can save money by going the DIY route, often the results are the opposite—you end up paying more to fix mistakes that were made during the project. Additionally, by hiring the right professional, your project will be well-managed and organized as opposed to the chaos that can sometimes ensue when inexperienced homeowners take on remodels on their own.

4. THE LACK OF VISION

Home remodeling projects can go wrong quickly without a plan. And lack of a plan often stems from not knowing what you want from the beginning. If you start a home renovation project only to change your mind about major elements halfway through, it can cause significant problems and extra expense.

The solution? Work with a remodeling contractor who can provide the insight and vision you need to make your dream into a reality. You may not know exactly what you want—and that's okay! Work with an experienced builder that can offer guidance specific to your project, instead of a cookie-cutter approach.