



Designing Your Remodeling Project

Think your project through from start to finish. Your home represents a large investment. Its proper care and maintenance are essential. Your home must suit your present needs as well as your lifestyle. Look over your property carefully. What repairs are needed? What improvements would you like? Think ahead and determine your future needs. Do you need an additional bedroom, a refurnished bath, or a modern kitchen? Professional remodeling contractors can help you in your planning by outlining options and discussing the improvements you can make within your budget. In order to best achieve your objective, you should define which of the following alternatives represents the best approach for your project.

1. Contractor

Many home improvements such as porch construction, roofing, siding and window replacement may not require professional design services and are well handled by the experienced contractor whose knowledge of materials and methods has been gained by years on the job. Even though the job may be relatively small, its successful completion is important to you. Small jobs, too, need careful planning and attention to details.

2. The Design/Build Contractor

Design/build is a concept developed to benefit the homeowner by providing both quality design and construction services within the same general contracting company. A few of the advantages of working with a design/build firm are:

- **Job costs** - A design/build contractor knows his job costs, so throughout the design process, the project is being engineered to fit your budget and needs.
- **Communications** - Developing clear specifications, and precise, responsible design are crucial aspects of the entire process. The lines of communication that are developed in the design stage prepare the groundwork for a clear, wellrun remodeling project.
- **Teamwork** - When you contract with a professional design/build firm, you become part of a team whose goal is to design and construct a project that will fit your needs.

3. Architect/Designer

In cases where your professional remodeler does not provide design services, you may wish to seek the assistance of a professionally trained architect/designer. It is best to work with an architect/designer experienced with remodeling; he or she will be more sensitive to the special challenges that remodeling presents.

Think About Design and Function

Design and function should be foremost in your mind if you're thinking of adding a room or converting an existing room. When planning a larger, more complicated project give thought to details such as, intended use of the space, electrical outlet and cable hookup locations, the type of lighting required, and your current and future storage needs. These details will enable your home improvement to better suit your needs and your lifestyle. A professional remodeling contractor can also help you with time and money-saving hints.