

5 tips for a Model Remodel

You imagined. You planned. You saved. You're finally ready to embark on your dream renovation. Assuming you've found a professional, experienced, bonded and insured contractor who is the best fit for your project, it's important to lay the groundwork for a successful relationship.

Here are my top 5 tips for making sure you have an enjoyable experience through this often stressful and disruptive time. By implementing these 5 tips, you will reduce your stress, save money, stay on time and prepare yourself for as enjoyable an experience as possible!



Planning ahead, communicating openly, and putting everything in writing is a good way to ensure a project's success and bring it on schedule and on budget.

1 From the start, be very clear on what you want to accomplish. The more detail you can incorporate in your original specifications to your contractor, (for instance, where electrical outlets are to be placed and how many and what they operate), the more accurate your bid will be for materials and labor. Working with a professional interior designer in the beginning of your process can help you think through these details ahead of time, ensuring fewer change orders and therefore, less expense.

2 Delegate a point of contact. Decide ahead of time who has the final word on each aspect of the project. At any given time, there will be multiple people working in your home - tile installers, plumbers, electricians, etc. Is the final word the general contractor, the interior designer, the architect, or is it you, the homeowner? With final word comes liability, so think this decision through carefully and, as always, get it in writing.

3 Anticipate disruption. Expect that your home will not be your own for the life of the renovation and that there will be lots of dust and displaced furniture, etc. Decide ahead of time if you will stay in your home during the renovation or move into a short-term rental or extended stay hotel.

4 Insist on a weekly schedule. Your general contractor or interior designer can prepare this, so you know what decisions you are responsible for making - and by when. This allows you to keep your project on time, by giving the general contractor the time he/she needs to get your materials ordered and to the job site when needed. You'll have extra time for the custom items you'd like to have and for those unavoidable backorders.

5 Plan for changes. It's inevitable that somewhere along the way you will change your mind on a selection; or a change will be forced by what is uncovered when the walls are opened. Whichever the case, keep in mind that changes will almost always affect your project's schedule and cost. Talk with your contractor, in the beginning, about how change orders are handled and be sure to get that information in writing before you proceed.



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