



At Home on Cape Cod

Herbie's Tips & Trends from the
Home Builders & Remodelers Association of Cape Cod

Weigh Your Options Before a Do-it-Yourself Remodel

According to HUD and the U.S. Census Bureau, home owner do-it-yourself (DIY) projects accounted for 37 percent of all home remodeling projects performed nationwide from 2010-2011. While most professional remodelers understand that home owners will do some of their own home repairs or small renovations, after repairing many a DIY gone awry they overwhelmingly believe that many jobs should be left to the pros.

The desire among home owners to tackle repair and remodeling projects has risen with the popularity of Pinterest and design blogs and the prevalence of home improvement stores. Before attempting to recreate the gorgeous bathroom from your Pinterest board in your own home, consider the following before sinking your resources into the project.

Safety

Without the proper training and preparation, a DIYer can and has landed in the emergency room. Unfamiliarity with new tools and techniques can lead to life-threatening accidents.

Follow product directions and safety procedures and always use proper safety equipment.

A good rule of thumb for any home owner is to avoid projects that require a license. Veteran remodelers advise against doing electrical or plumbing work on your own and avoid making structural changes to walls, roofs and floors.

You run the risk of compromising the structural integrity of your home and having a large hole in your roof or floor. Leave this work in the hands of professionals with the proper training.

Even projects that appear simple like laying floor tile can result in you stubbing your toes every time you are in that room if improperly installed.

Time

DIYers often tackle larger projects than they can handle before the holidays so that visiting family can enjoy the updates. But when something goes wrong, there is no one to hold to the deadline. Hiring a professional will ensure that you have a contract with a completion date



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and that the remodeler will bring in whatever help is necessary to get the job finished on time.

Even professional remodelers sometimes need extra time on projects when they find surprises behind walls. Troubleshooting these issues often takes more time and expertise than originally planned. If timing is a priority for your weekend warrior, call a professional remodeler to get your project completed.

Cost

Purchasing new tools is exciting but consider the price of all the specialty tools used for a one-time project when they are sitting untouched in your garage for a few years.

Additionally, many of the products purchased for the DIY market, although designated by a name brand, are not always the same quality available to contractors. It is also important to verify the terms of the product warranty. Many warranties become void by improper installation.

Robert Criner, GMR, CAPS, CGP of Criner Remodeling in Yorktown, Va. cautions all motivated DIYers, "Does it really pay to do the job twice when you can pay a professional to do it once?"

There are some home projects that professional remodelers believe can be tackled by determined DIYers such as hanging pictures, interior painting, caulking, changing door knobs and cabinet pulls, and some aesthetic work (depending on skill level) such as installing crown molding. Just consider the safety risks, time and cost involved in a DIY project of any size.

Still think you can tackle a big remodeling project? Just remember, DIY projects should be fun and suit your skill level. If they're not, then consider hiring a professional.

For information about hiring a remodeler, visit capecodbuilders.org.



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