



Beautiful Bathrooms

Remodeling For ROI

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Bathroom Basics

The days when we took baths and showers weekly are long gone, fortunately. Now, the bathroom is one of the central areas of the home, and the daily rituals you perform there are an important part of your health and well-being. Little wonder, then, that we've shifted from single bathroom homes to houses containing several well-appointed facilities. And it's not just about convenience, either; it's also the potential return on your all-important real estate investment that's driving the current trend in bathroom remodeling.

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Statistics from the National Kitchen and Bath Association for 2012 and Remodeling Magazine's Cost vs. Value report for 2013 show that the return on investment for bathroom remodeling is up since 2011, with an average of 62 percent of the cost recouped on a mid-range, \$16,000 remodel, while upscale remodels recoup 56 percent of the average cost of \$52,000. Adding an

extra bathroom costs a homeowner an average of \$37,500, and he can expect to recoup 54.8 percent. To get the best return on your bathroom remodeling project, avoid spending more than 5.5 percent of your home's total projected value post-project.

DECISIONS, DECISIONS!

So, you've got some spare cash to invest in your home and you're thinking about bathrooms. What should your choice be? To add an extra bathroom? Remodel your master bathroom into the stylish, inviting venue you've always wanted it to be? Renovate your kids' outdated bathroom into a haven for a new baby or a fashion-conscious tween? Update the powder bathroom? Or should you have the guest bathroom fitted out for senior safety for when your mother-in-law comes to visit?

In the following pages, you'll find ideas and information to help you make these decisions, and have some fun in the process.



Master Bathroom Magnifique

Deciding to remodel your master bathroom raises questions about a number of issues you need to consider.

These include:

- What theme or ambience do I want?
- How do I make the most of the space I have available?
- What color scheme will work for me?
- How much storage do I need?
- Which fittings should I choose to maximize both style and value?

CHOOSING A THEME

If your master bathroom is en suite to your bedroom, you might want to carry through the theme you have in the bedroom. There's no rule that says you must, however; you can make it completely different if you like. Whatever you decide, your bathroom will benefit from the coordinated look a theme provides. Some common master bathroom themes are:

- **Traditional** — this theme makes use of antique bathroom fittings such as freestanding bathtubs, checkered floor tiles and decorative faucets
- **Modern** — install contemporary fittings such as a clear glass bath, shower enclosure and sink, streamlined steel faucets and a sleek ceramic floor
- **Rustic** — use the warmth of wood for a cabin-style shower, a cozy floor surface with radiant heating under the boards and storage cabinets made from treated logs



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Select items that are functional as well as beautiful to get the maximum use out of them.

- **Spa** — install a whirlpool bath with hydro jets that takes two or more at a time, heated towel rails and recessed lighting
- **Back to nature** — keep it bright and light with lots of windows, plants and a view of your garden or the river

COLOR COMBOS

Once you choose your theme, deciding on your color scheme is next on the list. Stick to one primary color and one neutral color, with shade variations on one of them. If your neutral color is white, the other color allows for multiple tones and shades. Choose a paint scheme that's practical and will last, and isn't too radical to keep for more than a season. Bright yellow might sound great in spring, but how will you feel about it during the doldrums of winter?

SPACE SAVERS

Modern bathrooms are typically fairly small rooms, so there's seldom space to waste. Use mirrors to create the illusion of space, open up a huge picture window into your garden if you're able, and build cabinetry flush against the wall to maximize your floor space. Al-

ways wanted a bidet? Consider a bidet attachment for the toilet seat. You'll need to replace the toilet to accommodate this, but it's a great way to have your cake and eat it.

SAVVY STORAGE

Install savvy storage options in places you wouldn't expect to find them—closets under the sink, floating glass shelves against the walls or a narrow, tiled ledge running around the room at a convenient height. Not only will this hold all your bottles of bath delights, but you can use it to display knick-knacks, vases of fresh flowers and candles galore.

FAB FITTINGS

Choosing the fixtures for your master bathroom means getting the best quality your money can buy. Look for environmentally friendly items such as low-flow, high performance shower heads and low-flush toilets. Select items that are functional as well as beautiful to get the maximum use out of them, and go for well-known brand names that come with solid warranties on the manufacture and workmanship.

Promising Powder Bathrooms

Remodeling a powder bathroom gives you the chance to have some fun. Because the room is typically only used for short periods by your guests, it's reasonable to expect that whatever color palette you choose will be long-lasting. You don't have to worry about trends or tastes shifting dramatically and necessitating regular updates, so you can afford to splurge on the "here and now."

ESCAPE FROM THE BOX

Think outside the box a little on this one! Try these ideas:

- Make a bold statement with sky blue walls to give the impression of sea and sky. Use gloss paint to catch rays of sunshine or candle light
- Create a luxurious feel with lacquered, aniline-dyed maple paneling and cabinetry
- Try lime-washed walls for a low-maintenance, earthy look that harmonizes with wrought-iron mirror frames and a bronze backsplash
- Make it whimsical with woodland wallpaper teamed with rough-hewn wood cabinets
- Add an Eastern angle with Oriental wicker paneling and stylized moldings

Powder bathrooms are often tucked away in odd corners of the house, giving them minimal space. Draw the eye away from the tiny area with feature walls or brightly colored drapes and fittings.

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REAP THE RETURNS

To get a realistic idea of the potential return on your investment, consult with a realtor in your area to find out the average selling price for similar homes, both with and without powder bathrooms. According to the Remodeling Magazine survey, a minor powder bathroom remodel costs an average of between \$6,100 and \$9,100 and you can expect to recoup 55 percent of that if you sell within two years.



Keeping the Kids Clean

Most homes these days have a second bathroom, whether it's for the kids or for guests. If not, your house likely dates back to the 1950s or beyond, and you should seriously consider adding one. If you have one that's functional but dreary, jazz it up for your baby, toddler, tween or teen by planning a layout that grows with the kids. Make sure it includes easy-care surfaces, lots of storage, robust fittings and accommodates little people.

FUNCTIONALITY OVER FASHION

Think about how long you want your current remodel to last. If you have young children and are planning more, lowering the height of the sink and toilet will help you teach them to be independent. If your youngest and last is already 5 years old, in a couple of years she will be able to reach regular height and you'll need to remodel again. Perhaps a platform around the base of the toilet and sink will do the trick, and they can be removed or remain as decorative features once they are no longer needed.

COOL THEMES FOR KIDS

Kids love themes. From Spiderman to sea urchins, fairies to flowers, they enjoy having their favorite cartoons, characters or creatures dancing around the walls. Try some of these ideas:

- Choose a functional color throughout and make it exciting with multi-colored accessories
- Add motif wall tiles alongside the bath or sink that tell your child's favorite story in pictures
- Paint a "fish tank" wall mural overlooking the bathtub
- Do a nature scene—trees, grass and blue sky—all around the room
- Try a nautical theme with bright blues and reds, and porthole windows
- Do a "magical kingdom" for little girls, with blue sky and clouds on the ceiling and flowers around the walls

SAFETY TIPS

Safety is paramount in any bathroom, and particularly one young children use. Install non-slip flooring such as a textured mosaic or quarry, glazed ceramic or cobblestone tiles. Large tiles give you fewer grout lines to keep clean, and porcelain is particularly durable. Consider a fiberglass bathtub with a ridged base and fit faucets that accept anti-scald covers to prevent young 'uns from turning on the hot taps. Include plenty of built-in storage at a height your child can reach, with D-handles that are easier to open with soapy hands.



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GOING AHEAD

You've decided to go ahead and it's time to get started. Here's a summary of the costs vs. ROI:

1 = Master / Kids' Bathroom (full size)

2 = Powder Bathroom*

		MID-RANGE REMODEL	UPSCALE REMODEL	BATHROOM ADDITION
1	Av. Cost	\$16,000	\$52,000	\$37,500
	ROI	62.5 percent	56 percent	54.8 percent
2	Av. Cost	\$5,000	\$6,500	\$22,500
	ROI	67 percent	78 percent	62.3 percent

*Project includes: Replacing cabinet, sink, toilet and fixtures. Add granite countertop. Install new tile surround and floor. Paint walls. Update lighting and electrical. Use above-average quality materials and finishing detail. (Source: Homewyse.com)



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TIMELINE

Your timetable for a full remodel of your master or kids' bathroom could take the best part of a month, if your contractor only works on business days. Here's a sample timetable for a project of this nature:

TASK	DAYS	DETAILS
Demolition	2	This could take longer if the bathroom is upstairs or it's difficult to get the debris out.
Rough Carpentry	2	This depends on whether repairs are required to the underlying infrastructure. If not, skip this part.
Plumbing Rough-in	2	Base your estimate on whether you're changing the location of items such as the bathtub and the sink.
Electrical	1	Unless you're completely changing the electrical layout, part of a day should be enough for this task.
Insulation	1	Usually takes less than a day but difficult to do at the same time as other work.
Hang Drywall	1	Can be done as soon as the insulation is complete.
Finish Drywall	2	Includes application of joint compound, drying time, sanding and repeating.
Tile work	3	If you're redoing the tiling, you need time for the cement and grouting to dry.
Cabinetry	2	This depends on the number of cabinets you're installing and whether they are custom-made onsite or off the shelf.
Flooring	2	Vinyl flooring is quick to lay, but tile, stone or wood takes a bit longer. Anything with cement and grouting needs drying time.
Fixtures, etc.	1	Connecting fixtures to the plumbing, such as the toilet, sink and drains.
Miscellaneous	1	Work in an extra day for contingencies.
TOTAL	20	



Getting Inspiration

Remodeling your bathroom requires a healthy dose of patience and loads of inspiration, in addition to the funds and a good contractor. Here are a few resources to help you with ideas for the bathroom of your dreams:

[Houzz](#)

[Pinterest](#)

[HGTV](#)

[DIY Network](#)

[This Old House](#)

[Better Homes and Gardens](#)

[National Kitchen and Bath Association](#)



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CHECKLISTS

Questions To Ask Yourself Before You Begin

- ✓ What is the main purpose for remodeling – home improvement, resale, personal enjoyment or functionality?
- ✓ How much money do I have available to spend?
- ✓ Am I remodeling for the short term (e.g., immediate resale) or for the long term?
- ✓ How often is the bathroom used and is this likely to change in the near future?
- ✓ How many people usually use the room at the same time?
- ✓ What are my “must haves” and what are the “luxury items” I could do without if necessary?

What To Look For In a Good Remodeler/Contractor

- ✓ **Written estimate.** Never, ever enter into an agreement based on a verbal quotation, even if you know the contractor personally and trust him. It's easy for anyone to overlook something and a written estimate at least ensures you are both on the same page with the scope of work and the fittings you want.
- ✓ **Timeline and work processes.** The contractor should be able to give you a projected timeline with a breakdown of milestones, so you have an idea of when you'll get your bathroom—and home—back.
- ✓ **Contract or agreement.** Often, this takes the form of a signature accepting the written estimate. If this doesn't provide the customer with details of the terms and conditions,

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in the event of a dispute, the contractor could come up with loopholes for his own benefit.

- ✓ **Personal references.** A good contractor should be willing and able to provide at least two telephone numbers or email addresses of satisfied customers that you can contact yourself to get a reference. Don't fall for anonymous client testimonials on a website—those can easily be faked.
- ✓ **Proof of Liability insurance.** Ask to see evidence that your contractor is covered for any mishaps that happen on your premises.
- ✓ **Workmen's compensation insurance.** The contractor should provide a certificate to show the workers are covered, or if the workers are sub-contractors then they should provide their own. Otherwise you may end up being held liable for any injuries that occur on your premises.
- ✓ **Standard warranty.** Your contractor should have a standard warranty covering his workmanship for a certain period of time

Finalize the agreement, pay your deposit and let your contractor get started. Monitor the work to see if he achieves the projected timeline. Then wait for your new bathroom to be revealed in all its glory.



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About Bencar Building Systems, LLC

Bencar Building Systems, LLC is a custom home builder and remodeler in the Wallington area. We have been in business for four generations and have built thousands of quality homes.

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