

### Tips on Home Remodeling/Construction

Preliminary “Home”-work is the key to success.

- Know your budget.  
It is always important to know exactly what you want to spend on your project. Even if you are not sure what that “number” is you can determine what you can afford to spend or what the top price for a home in your neighborhood is. Knowing the neighborhood price can keep you from over building the neighborhood. Communicating this to your Architect will help give you some confidence that your project will not be over budget.
- Always have 10%-20% in reserve for cost overruns and upgrades.  
You always need to have additional funds available in case there are unexpected problems on the jobsite or if you decide that you want to upgrade some of your appliances, plumbing fixtures and other items. You will want to know that you have the funding available to do this.
- Determine if you can live thru the remodel and be sure to budget for moving out, storage, etc. if need be.  
Remodeling can be a noisy, messy and at times a stressful process. You would be well advised to move out of your home to give yourself a place to go during the construction to get away from all the dust and noise. It can help you keep a clear head during the difficult times. *You will need to budget for this as well as storing your furniture in your overall construction cost analysis.*
- Don't over estimate your ability to endure a remodel.  
As mentioned above, everyone likes to think that they can endure a little bit of hardship. It can be detrimental to the construction process if you are excessively stressed out when you are trying to make decisions and all you want is your house back in shape to live in. You may make some decisions you will regret further down the road.
- Although the following is the Architect's responsibility; you should try to find out as much as you can about your homes zoning, ordinances and deed restrictions.  
Your Architect (Please visit our article on [“Why Hire an Architect”](#)) will check into your zoning and any conservation ordinances that affect your project that is their job. If you have some basic understandings of you site setbacks or how high you can build you may save yourself some disappointment by knowing what is available to you for your project. You will also be able help direct your Architect in the correct direction more quickly during the design process.





**ARCHITECTURA**  
1909 Abrams Parkway; Ste B  
Dallas, Texas 75214  
214-821-2044 Office  
214-821-2041 Fax  
www.architecturusa.com

INTERIORS

ARCHITECTURE

PLANNING

- Get warranties for your home and appliances.  
You will need to get all warranties for your home appliances and equipment in case you have any problems. You also need to find out what warranties the contractor will provide for the general construction as well.
- Check your home insurance.  
You will need to check with your homeowner's insurance to see what you are covered for if the worst happens during construction; fire, flood, theft or accidents. Your contractor should carry builders risk insurance, but you need to make sure you're covered.
- Hire a professional Architect (Please read our article on ["Why Hire an Architect"](#)).  
Hiring an Architect can seem like an expense, but having a well thought out plan can help you determine your needs and keep in budget. It is the Architect's business to find out what you want, how much you want to spend and what the cities' code regulations require. If upfront planning isn't done, you can end up spending more during the process to correct mistakes or oversights.
- Know what is truly important to you in the design and what is a desire, but not essential.  
Very seldom in the design and construction process does one hear, "I wish we'd spent more money on our home". Normally you are always fighting the budget, so it is important to know the difference between what is essential for the renovation and what is just a desire. Knowing this will allow you to focus on the important items and give you some areas that could be cut out if necessary.
- Determine what design styles and thoughts you *like* and what you *don't* like.  
Most people basically know what they like and don't like, but being able to communicate this to the Architect or contractor may be challenging for some individuals. Whether you communicate by photographs or by talking about "the house around the corner", being able to communicate your vision of the "feel" of the project is important. Putting together a notebook with photographs and a verbal description can be very useful.
- Consider the daily flow of your life and the flow of your life during special occasions.  
You walk through your home every day, but you may not analyze your daily activities. Your Architect should help you put this into perspective, but you should look and see how your daily life flows through out your home and how you might use your house in the future.





**ARCHITECTURA**  
1909 Abrams Parkway; Ste B  
Dallas, Texas 75214  
214-821-2044 Office  
214-821-2041 Fax  
www.architecturausa.com

INTERIORS

ARCHITECTURE

PLANNING

- Try not to get caught up early on the small details, think big about spaces, the focal points, the shapes and keep the smaller details for later in the design process.  
If you think about your project in its total it can be a bit daunting. Focus first on the big picture what spaces you need and what relationship they should have to one another. What shapes or style you are looking for? After this you can start to look in at each of these spaces in greater detail.
- If you do have a specialty item whether it be an oversize piece of furniture, artwork ,appliance or plumbing fixture **do bring that up early in the process** as it may affect the flow and organization of space.  
Some projects may have an oversized piece of furniture, appliance or a painting and sculpture collection that needs to be consideration early in the project. This should be brought up so that appropriate spaces can be designed for them.
- Determine the minimum sizes that the space you want need to be and the amount of storage you need so that you will not have furniture problems later on.  
As previously mentioned, budget is always a consideration. Knowing what minimum sizes your rooms can be to fit furniture and walk space may be important to know if the budget looks challenging.
- Before remodeling be sure that all the “stuff” you have in your home is necessary.  
Before you go to the expense of adding space to house your stuff, make sure you really need all of this. You might save yourself some money if you “purge” your belongings and then you can reduce the size of your addition.
- Hire the best contractor for the project at hand, check their references and check out their insurance.  
(Read our article on [“Hiring a Contractor”](#))  
Not all projects require a premium contractor, but keep in mind if you want a quality project you will be paying for it. Great work does not come with a discount and very seldom even good work is discounted.





ARCHITECTURA

## ARCHITECTURA

1909 Abrams Parkway; Ste B

Dallas, Texas 75214

214-821-2044 Office

214-821-2041 Fax

[www.architecturausa.com](http://www.architecturausa.com)

### INTERIORS

### ARCHITECTURE

### PLANNING

- Be sure when hiring a contractor that your agreement includes a written description that the remodel is based on the plans you are providing to the contractor.  
So that you do not have a dispute with your contractor well details set of plans should be done and referenced to in the contract when hiring the contractor. A written description might be helpful as well. The project may seem obvious to you but you need to be sure that the contractor understands the project as well and if need be to be able to refer back to the plans or written description in event of difference of opinion.
- Get a written description of the completion date.  
Completion dates should be written into the contract. This gives the homeowner and the contractor a date to focus on. Along with the date a timeline or critical flow chart should be developed so that if the project does get off the schedule the homeowner and contractor will know early on and not a few weeks before the completion date.
- Be sure to get lien releases from all the sub-contractors during construction.  
You want to make sure that you own your own home at the end of the project. Getting the contractor to give you lien releases from all the sub contractors assures you that these people have been paid and you should not expect any problems from liens.

*©2009. Architectura and Architecturausa.com. No reprint without permission. (and yes, we can find out if you have...especially if you have re-posted on the internet, so you bloggers out there...ask permission for a link-back please! More than likely you will get it!) All rights reserved.*

