

Remodeling Your Home

Part Three -- Reasons to Remodel Good and Bad

If you're still thinking about home remodeling, let's continue to explore some of the typical reasons that homeowners remodel. My experiences with hundreds of home remodels, have given me some real insight into what makes sense, and what does not. You know the remodeling process can involve a lot of money, time, personal energy, and maybe some aggravation thrown in for good measure. You also know that if you make a mistake in remodeling, it could be a BIG mistake, that probably won't be undone. I'm going to continue to share my analysis of these common reasons for remodeling with you, to help you make a sound decision about whether remodeling makes sense for you.

"We have a baby due in just five months! There's no time to move! We have to add on and add on fast so we have space! This is an emergency!!!"

As I already noted, remodeling is work. And like any work, it carries with it some stress. There is also an element of fun, excitement and great personal satisfaction that can be achieved with remodeling. All those positive, however, are *out the window* if you do not allow time to go through a rational, relaxed and careful process. Projects can be done on short time frames for specific reasons, but that scenario should be avoided if at all possible. It is better to be comfortable in a rental than to be running around in a panic mode for months on end - especially when dollars are literally flying out of your hands, as they seem to at times during a large remodel.

Without time to relax, and make decisions carefully, and in their own time, the chances of making mistakes is increased. Mistakes, and the heightened uncertainty of potential mistakes, increases stress, which reduces health. Pretty soon, you're caught in a vicious negative cycle. Good things take time; you

have to make the time to let good things happen.

"We are on a tight timeline and limited budget. We figured out a way to attach a simple box shape onto the back of our house and make a room out of it. We took our sketch and got bids from several contractors whose names we got from the TV Guide; it's cheap, fast and we are ready to go."

Have you ever been to an open house of an existing home and found some peculiar fragment of a room with a stair stuck in it? Often, it's a piece of left over space from a bedroom. While you are rolling your eyes in amusement, the realtor is frantically rolling off clever phrases, explaining how you might use that peculiar space -- "It's a ... music area, it's a ... study nook, ...it's a .. what do you call it anyway?..." While the realtor is doing the 'creative marketing thing', you're thinking, "how much would it cost to make it look and work right?" Chances are, you're mentally subtracting the cost to fix it from the value you see in the house.

Have you ever seen one of those "aluminum rooms" you can order from the back of T.V. Guide plugged onto the back of an older house? While the selling home owner is proudly adding that to the square footage thinking, "Gosh, I just added 400 square feet of value to my house", you , the potential purchaser are thinking, "how much more will it cost to demolish that sore thumb add on", and subtract the demolition cost from your idea of the house's worth.

Badly done remodels almost always take away more value than they add. They are like waving a flag that has printed on it, for all to see, "Hey everyone - look what I did cheap and fast - and I did it all myself without any professional advice or help whatsoever!". When you bring these types of additions to the

market place, they are looked at with cold hard eyes - the same way you probably look at them when you have seen them on other people's houses. The realtor's clever phrases do not sway you. If it is *a funny piece of leftover space*, as a potential purchaser you are not concerned about the long, personal story of why those design compromises made sense to the previous owners. As far as you're concerned, and as far as the marketplace is concerned, it is what it is, and the house works how it works right now. And that's that.

series, we'll start to talk about the good reasons for remodeling! If you've been following along, this will be your chance to rack up some pluses. Hopefully there will be enough, to balance any negatives that you may have accumulated so far.

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Enough of the negative! In the next in this