FOSTER
Remodeling
Solutions, inc.
DESIGN-BUILD

Planning the Perfect RENOVATION

Renovating a home is much more than upgrading rooms, constructing home additions, or updating kitchen cabinets. Renovating a home is planning for the future, investing in home value, and increasing your quality of life. However, planning the perfect renovation requires just that — well-executed planning. Planning the perfect renovation means asking the right questions to find the perfect contractor and asking yourself the right questions to know if the time is right to remodel.

To find the right contractor, you must first assess the contractor's upfront professionalism, ability to communicate, price, reputation, and credentials. Trusting your contractor and having open communication with them will ultimately decide the success or headache of your renovation project. To evaluate your potential contractor, the following are essential questions that any homeowner should ask.

1 How is the price established for your project?

Some contractors provide bids as estimates, which can lead to higher costs as the project progresses. This often stems from insufficient planning, due diligence, and reliance on allowances. To avoid unexpected expenses, request a fixed price upfront to keep the project within budget.

At Foster Remodeling Solutions, we approach the budgeting process in clear phases to ensure transparency and alignment with your goals. We start by visiting your home, conducting a thorough assessment, and having an in-depth conversation about your budget. From there, we return to our office to develop a preliminary design and provide a budget range. Once you're happy with this initial plan, we move into the detailed design phase. Only after the design is finalized and all material selections are made will we provide you with a fixed, comprehensive price.

2 How long has the contractor been in business?

When seeking a contractor, prioritize those with a well-established track record in the local community. Fortunately, many accomplished contractors readily share their achievements and past endeavors. Additionally, inquire about the number of similar projects the contractor has undertaken in the past year.

Foster Remodeling Solutions has been in business for over 41 years. Started and still run by David Foster, our proven process has kept customers coming back to us again and again. We have a long list of referrals we can provide.

3 Does the contractor have Insurance and Worker's Compensation?

Ensure that your contractor has the necessary insurance coverage for emergencies. In Virginia, contractors with two or more employees are required to a policy. This safeguards, you, the property owner, financially. Additionally, it's important to verify the validity of the insurance.

We will provide a copy of our certificate of insurance for all our policies, including our worker's compensation coverage. In the event of an accident on your property during construction, we want you to feel confident that we have the necessary insurance to cover any incidents.

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4 What is the general timeframe of the project?

After selecting a contractor, the next step is to establish work schedules and timeframes. It is importanat to establish a schedule before beginning the project. Key questions to ask include: What's the estimated project start and completion date? What are the typical work hours and days for the crew? Will I be informed about any schedule changes? These inquiries help clarify completion dates and daily work routines, ensuring you stay informed about any schedule adjustments or delays.

At the start of your project, you'll receive a detailed job schedule. Your Lead Carpenter will ensure everything runs smoothly, but if any issues or delays occur, he will promptly inform you of any changes to the schedule. We also include a start date and a completion date in our contract.

5 Are permits required for the project?

All remodeling projects require permits. A failure to obtain the necessary permits or arrange inspections can be illegal. In a worst case scenario, demolishing a project may be necessary if there is no way to comply with the law. It is vital to discuss all aspects of the permit process with your remodeling contractor before beginning the project.

We obtain all permits necessary. As these permits are received they will be posted onsite to ensure all building requirements are covered.

6 Are there any design services available?

If your renovation is a large or extensive project, you will most likely need architectural design assistance. Does your contractor have design-build capabilities?

Our team includes both architectural and interior designers, all working together under one roof to ensure seamless collaboration and project flow. They'll guide you through every step of the process. From selecting cabinets, countertops, and flooring to choosing fixtures and other project essentials, they provide full support, all included in the cost of your project. We ensure that everything is functional and beautiful and, of course, structurally sound and up to code.

7 Will I always have a contact person?

Effective communication with the contractor is crucial for successful home renovations. Ensure you have reliable contact information for all involved parties before the project starts. Knowing who will be on-site each day, facilitates smooth supervision and communication throughout the process.

A Lead Carpenter will be assigned to your project and serve as your daily point of contact. He will keep you updated on the schedule and outline the plans for each day. Additionally, you'll receive the contact information for your Designer and Project Manager in case the Lead Carpenter is unavailable to answer your questions.

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8 How will you protect my property?

Needless to say, this is a conversation that needs to take place before demolition. Topics like what dust containment measures can be taken and if yard protection is offered are important details to discuss. Remember, in all likelyhood, you'll still need your house to be livable during construction.

To protect the rest of your home, we install zip walls made of durable, heavy-duty plastic with a zipper for easy access. We also use air scrubbers to reduce dust and place sticky pads to prevent debris from sticking to workers' shoes. Additionally, shoe covers are worn as needed to ensure cleanliness throughout the project.

9 How will you communicate with me?

Plan with your contractor the best way to communicate with you. Is there a work schedule you can follow? What is the best time during the week for updates? For many, planning weekly meetings with your project manager is a great way to ask questions face to face.

During our initial pre-construction meeting, we will review your contact information and discuss your preferred method of communication, whether it's through phone calls, meetings, emails or text messages.

10 What documentation is provided at the end of the project?

Discuss with your contractor any documentation you would like to receive upon completion of your project. Although contracts usually include end-of-project paperwork, such as lien releases, and copies of inspection reports, there may be additional paperwork you will find valuable.

You'll receive a "Warranty Binder" that includes important documents such as Foster's Warranty Agreement, Final Lien Release, a copy of the Contract Proposal, Product Warranties, manuals for all installed items, and care guides for maintaining the products used in your project.

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Along with the important questions to ask your contractor, there are also important questions to consider yourself before beginning a renovation project. Here are a few things to think about:

What is my budget?
The first step is to realistically determine what you want to invest and outline all the must-haves that you'd like to invest in. Also, you must prepare for any surprise costs that may arise and ensure you have extra money in the budget.

Am I ready for a renovation?
Try to be mentally and emotionally prepared for the interruption, dust, debris an noise of a renovation.

Is this realistic?
Be realistic about your expectations and conside your budget, resources, and your existing home.

Am I planning for the future?
Will you still love the design styles you chose five or ten years from now? Do you expect any significant life changes that may impact your renovation decisions today? Planning for the future will ensure a smart investment.

Am I remembering the details?
Although a contractor is paid to remember the details, it's up to you to communicate effectively regarding what you want and don't want. Clarity is key in preventing miscommunication. Be sure to receive all details in writing and captured in your construction plans.

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Have I outlined my goals and vision?

Take a realistic inventory of your space, and outline what you would like to see after renovations. How will the renovations affect your home inside, outside and in the future?

Have I been inspired by others?

It's important to avoid costly mistakes made in the past by other homeowners. Do your research, ask questions to those who have undergone a similiar experience, talk to friends, and follow up on recommendations. The more research you do, the more inspired you will become.

Have I planned for problems?

Whether it's supply shortages, delays in shipping or miscommunication with your contractor, it's important to always plan for a few problems. Even if your renovations goes off without a hitch, planning for problems offers you a level of preparedness if something goes awry.

Renovating a home can be a huge undertaking, but the rewards of a well-done remodeling project can last a lifetime, especially with the guidance of a quality and experienced contractor. With over 40 years of experience in the Northern Virginia area, Foster Remodeling Solutions has built a reputation as a premier remodeling company with expert design, craftsmanship and customer service.

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Scan the QR Code to make an appointment to answer all your questions.

"Our Process Makes it Perfect"

Call 703-550-1371 or online
www.FosterRemodeling.com

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