

**The Cost Question**

A question we get all the time is "how much does a remodeling project cost?" The presumption, we assume, is that there is a standard price for a given (or any?) remodeling project that we can simply quote over the phone.

But in the business of professional remodeling, it doesn't work that way. For us, it's an impossible question to answer without a lot more information and detail, and one that can only be derived once we agree on a complete scope of work and apply real costs to that scope. Before that, it's akin to asking, "How much does a vacation cost?" without first knowing where and for how long you plan to go, and by what mode of transportation, among other considerations.

The fact is, the details (and therefore cost) of every remodeling project are unique, and the cost of your remodel is entirely up to you, not your remodeling contractor. Only you know how much you can afford and what you want in your remodeled space or home. It's our job to apply our expertise and experience to finely detail your wants and needs and then remodel your home to meet (or ideally exceed) those expectations within your budget.

That's why it is so important to determine and then share your budget with us from the first moment you select us to remodel your home, well before any contracts are signed or construction begins. Using the vacation analogy, we are like a travel agent working with you to plan a trip.

Still, the "What does it cost?" question persists. So, it might be helpful to understand what goes into or affects the cost (or ultimate price) of a remodeling project to gain a better perspective.

For instance, the cost of similarly sized room additions or kitchen remodels vary considerably due to the scope of work -- a one- or two-story addition, a complete gutting of the kitchen vs. refacing the cabinets and replacing the appliances -- as well as the level of detail and desired finishes. A good-quality linoleum floor or carpet will cost considerably less than a stone, tile or wood floor, for instance.

There's also the stuff you don't see right away, such as necessary upgrades to the plumbing or electrical systems exposed during demolition, or the need to alter any structural components to either beef them up or move walls or support posts or beams to enlarge the space. We work hard to investigate and discover those "hidden" costs and include them in the budget before we sign a contract, but those items are unique to each project and certainly impact the cost of your particular remodel.

In addition, costs related to acquiring permits or complying with current code requirements can add from a few hundred to a few thousand dollars to the bottom line of a remodeling project, regardless of the basic scope. Labor and material costs can also vary substantially based upon the time of the year, the availability and demand of building materials and workers, weather conditions (such as for a room addition, which requires a lot of exterior work), and the complexity of the project.

The list of variables goes on, and we're happy to discuss them with you and explain how they might impact the cost of your remodeling project. But, in our view, it's short-sighted to ask us up-front what a remodel of any kind will cost, and certainly to base a very important (and likely expensive) decision on that metric alone.

Better, we think, to get a full understanding of our process and expertise and marry those skills with what you can afford and want and need in a remodeling project to achieve your goals.