

KEYSTONE IMPACT

FREE HOMEOWNER REMODEL PLANNING GUIDE

How to plan a kitchen or bathroom remodel
without getting taken advantage of.

**Every 10 remodels completed
= 1 homeowner helped.**

Brought to you by Keystone Kitchen and Bath
Serving Fresno, Clovis, Madera, and the Central Valley
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Before You Remodel, Read This First

A beautiful remodel should not start with stress, confusion, or a contractor rushing you into a decision. A strong remodel starts with a strong homeowner who understands the basics before signing anything.

This guide was created by Keystone Impact, the homeowner education and community giving side of Keystone Kitchen and Bath. Use it to plan smarter, ask better questions, and protect your money before you begin a kitchen or bathroom remodel.

The Keystone rule:

Do not start a remodel until you understand the scope, the payment schedule, the materials, the timeline, and who is responsible for communication. If those items are unclear, the project is not ready.

What this guide will help you do

- Understand what to prepare before contacting a contractor.
- Know which questions to ask before giving a deposit.
- Recognize red flags before they cost you thousands.
- Plan your budget more realistically.
- Avoid common mistakes homeowners make during remodeling.

The 7 Costliest Mistakes Homeowners Make

1. Shopping by the cheapest price only

A low number can hide missing labor, cheap materials, no project management, weak communication, or change orders later.

2. Not knowing what is included

You need to know what is included, what is excluded, what is allowance based, and what may become a change order.

3. Starting without a realistic budget

A remodel is not just cabinets or tile. It may involve demo, plumbing, electrical, labor, materials, project management, and inspections.

4. Paying too much too soon

Deposits and payments should be tied to clear phases. Avoid large payments with no schedule, no scope, and no proof of progress.

5. Not asking who will manage the job

The person who sells the job may not be the person managing the job. Know who your main contact is.

6. Changing selections too late

Cabinets, counters, tile, fixtures, and special orders can affect timing and cost. Late changes create delays.

7. Ignoring communication problems early

If communication is poor before you pay, it usually gets worse after the project starts.

Questions to Ask Before Hiring a Remodeler

Do not be afraid to ask direct questions. A professional company should be able to explain their process clearly.

- Who will be my main point of contact once the project starts?
- What is included in the proposal?
- What is not included in the proposal?
- How are change orders handled?
- What is the payment schedule?
- How long is the estimated timeline?
- Who orders materials and who is responsible if something is delayed?
- Will I receive a written scope before work begins?
- What happens if I change my mind after materials are ordered?
- How often will I receive updates?
- What warranty or workmanship coverage is provided?

Homeowner tip

Take notes during every consultation. If the contractor cannot explain the process in plain English, that is a warning sign.

Remodel Budget Reality Check

A remodel budget should match the home, the scope, the materials, and the level of work required. A small refresh is different from a full kitchen or bathroom transformation.

Budget item	What to consider
Labor	Demo, installation, plumbing, electrical, repairs, texture, paint, tile, cabinets, flooring, and cleanup.
Cabinets	Stock, semi-custom, custom, refacing, door replacement, hardware, moldings, and modifications.
Materials	Tile, counters, sink, faucet, fixtures, flooring, backsplash, waterproofing, and other finish selections.
Hidden conditions	Water damage, framing issues, outdated plumbing, electrical corrections, uneven floors, and code related items.
Project management	Scheduling, communication, ordering, coordination, quality control, and jobsite problem solving.

Straight truth:

If a price sounds too good to be true, it usually means something is missing. The cheapest bid can become the most expensive mistake when the scope is incomplete.

Contractor Red Flags

One red flag does not always mean the contractor is bad, but several red flags together should make you slow down.

- No written scope of work.
- Pressure to pay quickly before you understand the details.
- No clear payment schedule.
- Poor communication before the job starts.
- No clear start date or timeline.
- They tell you everything is easy without checking the real conditions.
- They avoid explaining what is included and what is not included.
- They get irritated when you ask reasonable questions.
- They only communicate by text and avoid written agreements.

Protect yourself

Before signing, save copies of your estimate, contract, messages, receipts, payment proof, selections, photos, and change orders. Documentation protects both the homeowner and the contractor.

Your Pre-Consultation Checklist

Before meeting with a remodeler, gather the information below. This helps you get a more accurate conversation and saves time.

- Photos of your current kitchen or bathroom.
- Basic measurements if you have them.
- A list of what bothers you most about the space.
- A list of must haves and nice to haves.
- Inspiration photos from Pinterest, Instagram, magazines, or showrooms.
- Your realistic budget range.
- Your ideal timeline.
- Any known issues like leaks, mold, old plumbing, electrical problems, or damaged flooring.
- Whether this is your forever home, rental, investment, or future resale property.
- Any accessibility needs for seniors, children, or disabled family members.

Bring this guide with you to your consultation and use it as a simple checklist.

Next Steps With Keystone

Keystone Kitchen and Bath helps homeowners plan kitchen and bathroom remodels with a clear process, realistic guidance, and professional project support.

If you are planning a remodel in Fresno, Clovis, Madera, or the Central Valley, start with a consultation and bring photos, ideas, and your questions.

Keystone Impact

Every 10 remodels completed = 1 homeowner helped. The more homes Keystone remodels, the more homeowners Keystone Impact can support through education, resources, and future sponsored home improvement projects.

Contact Keystone Kitchen and Bath

- Website: www.keystonekitchenbath.com
- Phone: (559) 272-5522
- Location: Fresno, CA
- Service Area: Fresno, Clovis, Madera, and the Central Valley

Disclaimer

This guide is for general homeowner education only. It is not legal, financial, construction, engineering, or code compliance advice. Every home and project is different. Always consult qualified professionals before making final remodeling decisions.