

## 6 things you must know about planning and renovating your bathroom

**A bit of careful planning will help you avoid costly delays and disappointment.**

Before you commit to your bathroom renovation, make sure you balance the look you want with the technical aspects of how your bathroom actually works.

### **Consider gutting your old bathroom.**

If you have tiles that need replacing, chances are you have surprises waiting to be discovered. Any house can have problems behind existing tile and grout-- wet insulation, rotting drywall, and possible mould. Plus, installing new tile and paint requires a smooth clean new surface in any case.

**Have a realistic budget.** You'll pay between \$6,000 and \$10,000 for a new tub, toilet, sink, tiles, flooring and lighting, more if you want to invest in natural stone or a soaking tub – which has additional hidden costs you need to consider (see below). You can make dramatic changes for less with a new sink, faucets and flooring.

**Budget for the unexpected.** You will need between 10 and 15 percent of your budget to fix the surprises that inevitably show up behind your old tile and fixtures.

Bringing plumbing and electrical up to code, leveling the sub floor, and replacing drywall with new mould-resistant products all have to be done before your contractor can even start installing your gorgeous vanity.

**Choose products made for bathrooms.** Even though your bathroom has a vent, the environment is still humid. Look for paints and other supplies that are made specifically for bathrooms. They're often slightly more

expensive, but you'll avoid redoing your work later.

All installed electrical outlets should be GFI (ground fault interrupted) rated to prevent accidental electrocution.

### **Plan ahead for large or specialty tubs.**

Always plan in advance for additional weight load on the floor, and install massage or whirlpool tubs according to technical specifications for electrical, water and sewage fixtures. You will have structural issues you must accommodate.

Make sure you can get the tub into your bathroom – measure stairs, hallways and doors and bring these measurements with you when shopping for tubs and other large items that can't be taken apart.

You will need an access panel for the motor that powers a whirlpool tub. This can go in a closet next to the bathroom if you have one; otherwise you will need to build a special space. Remember the motor will make noise, so consider where to place it for a peaceful bath experience.

**Check your water pressure.** It is very difficult to increase the water pressure in your bathroom without rethinking the plumbing in your whole house.

If you want a multiple jet shower for example, this makes a difference. Remember you may have 6 jets, but the water pressure will be the same as when you only had one, and you may get more of a dribble than the sumptuous experience you've paid for.