

Stories abound of remodeling projects fraught with chaos, frustration, out-of-control costs and unexpected delays. Many homeowners have come to expect that they must endure these necessary evils before they can finally have the home of their dreams. Our clients will tell you that it doesn't have to be that way. They will tell you that their remodel was carefully planned and executed, that they were always in control of the budget, and that they knew exactly what to expect. Our collaborative method ensures that your design develops in close concert with your budget and that your remodel will always be driven by your priorities. Our estimates are meticulously detailed and full-disclosure, so you never have to wonder what you're buying. Since 1998, we have helped over two hundred and fifty savvy Bay Area homeowners explore their options and remodel with confidence. Here is a brief summary of how our process works:

### *PRIORITIZE*

After an initial chat by phone, we meet with you (and your design professional, if applicable,) typically at the project site, so that you can tell us what you really want from your remodel. The *why* is as important as the *what*; is this to be your home-sweet-home for years to come, tailored exactly to your tastes, or is the resale market first on your mind? Is it some combination of the two? The more you can tell us about your priorities, the more effectively we can help you prepare.

### *ESTIMATE*

We compile your preliminary, yet detailed and comprehensive, Estimating Template. Itemized by trade, your Estimating Template includes pricing information for every aspect of the improvements you're considering and provides you with your first good look at the work your remodeling dollar can accomplish.

## REVISE

After you have reviewed your Estimating Template and provided us with your feedback, we revise the values to accomplish more of what you want and less of what you don't. It is at this stage that the team starts to really bring the scope of work and the budget into balance. Once we arrive at a solid pairing of design and price, your revised Estimating Template is then ready to serve as your working remodeling budget.

## ORGANIZE

Your project will ask that you answer a myriad of questions, both large and small. Your personalized *Owner's Checklist* allows you to organize the decision-making process and to be truly prepared for your remodel.

Let us show you how to prepare for and execute an outstanding remodel, addition, or new custom home. We look forward to hearing from you when you are ready to get started.



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# HIRING A CONTRACTOR – DO'S AND DON'TS

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## DON'T:

- Don't give anyone promising to perform work on your home a deposit of more than 10% or \$1,000.00 (*whichever is LESS*) before construction work has started. Any contractor asking for more money up front is breaking the law and risks losing his or her license and/or going to jail.
- Don't pay an architect to draft comprehensive plans for a project before you know, at least roughly, how much it will cost to build.
- Don't hire anyone to perform more than \$500.00 worth of work on your property without verifying the validity of his or her California Contractor's License (<https://www2.cslb.ca.gov/OnlineServices/CheckLicense/NameRequest.asp>). Don't hire anyone promising to perform work under the auspices of another contractor's license. That's illegal, and can mean that the person(s) performing the work has no real contractual responsibility.
- Don't hire a contractor without first obtaining certificates of their workers' compensation and liability insurance policies, or you will assume all liability for any accidents or injuries.
- Don't sign a contract without a clear, detailed, written description of the scope of work. A proposal comprised of only a brief summary, or one which only says it will build what is shown in the project drawings or specifications, leaves far too many items open to interpretation and disagreement. This unfortunate scenario virtually guarantees that a project will become more expensive and time-consuming than expected. Don't assume that anything not clearly described will turn out the way you hope it will. Get it in writing first.

## DO:

- Work together with your builder, architect, and designer to develop an efficient, practical, and pleasing design that you can afford.
- Check prospective contractors' references, license(s), and insurances.
- Ask to see contractors' finished work.
- Have a budget target in mind early on, and don't be shy about discussing it. A good builder's goal is not to squeeze as much money as possible from a project. On the contrary, we believe in helping our clients see how hard their construction dollar can work toward the results they want. It is precisely this commitment to providing value which has kept us in business since 1998.