

THE ULTIMATE HOME REMODELING GUIDE

YOUR ULTIMATE *HOW-TO* GUIDE ON ALL YOU
NEED TO KNOW FOR YOUR NEXT PROJECT



WHAT'S INSIDE...

- What to prepare before starting
- How to find the right contractor
- How to budget
- And more!

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HOW TO GET STARTED ON YOUR HOME REMODELING PROJECT

No matter how big or small your project may seem, dozens of questions are probably starting to flood your brain all at once.

Where will I get my product? What do I want it to look like? How do I choose a good contractor? How much is it going to cost? And first of all, how do I get started?

Figuring out where to start your project can be the most difficult part. **There are many paths you can take to getting started, and we're going to outline [7 steps to help you start your next project right](#).**

1 DEFINE THE SCOPE OF YOUR PROJECT

Outline what you're looking to renovate and the size of your project. For example, if you're thinking of replacing your home siding, do you just want the siding replaced, or are you thinking of including the soffit, fascia, or gutters too?

What you want to remodel and the size of your project will determine what products and services you need to research as well as what your budget is.

2 OUTLINE YOUR GOALS

When thinking about your goals, you want to consider quality, durability, and longevity.

Questions to consider to help outline your goals are:

- Are you looking for a product that is going to be strong and resistant to damage?
- How often will you use it (if applicable)?
- What do you want it to look like?
- How long do you want it to last?

3 RESEARCH PRODUCTS

You never want to blindly choose a product or contractor you know nothing about.

Looking at the pros and cons of the product, its design elements, how much it costs, and how it compares to others are just a few topics you should be researching. Then, you can have a better idea of the specific product type you are interested in, which will help narrow your options.

4 DETERMINE YOUR BUDGET

The scope of your project, goals, and product interests all directly affect your project's budget. If you're looking for a high-quality product and installation that is going to last, you cannot expect it to be the least expensive option.



Outlining your budget is about having realistic expectations. If you're just looking for the easiest and cheapest option, you will more than likely have to sacrifice the quality and longevity of the product.

5 RESEARCH INSTALLATION PROCESSES

How long your project is going to take comes down to the installation processes.

You want to know if your project can be completed in one day or one month.

You will also want to research what some of the best practices are for installing your project. This will help you find a high-quality contractor who knows what they are doing, or if you are planning on doing your project yourself, you can learn more about what and what not to do.



6 LOOK FOR A CONTRACTOR OR DIY

If you know you are going to hire a professional contractor, there are many things to consider before selecting the right one for you. **The quality of the contractor is similar to the quality of the product: it must align with your goals.**

If you're thinking of doing your project yourself, then you'll want to continue your extensive research into the products and installation skills necessary. You must also be aware of the risks of remodeling your home yourself, especially with larger projects like a window replacement or concrete coating.

7 MEET A CONTRACTOR AND GET STARTED

You've outlined your goals for your project, defined your budget, and researched all you can about the products and services you need.

The final step to get started on your project is to schedule a consultation with a contractor you trust or get started on your DIY project by making sure you have all the supplies and instructions you need.



When you're about to make a big purchase, it can cause some unnecessary stress. Now, talking about budgeting doesn't sound like a whole lot of fun. However, it's a crucial part of planning out your project to make it as stress-free as possible.

But where do you begin? How do you budget for your home remodeling project? As homeowners ourselves, we know the difficulty of trying to budget for your project, and we're here to help.

Here, we'll outline 5 simple steps to help you [create the right budget for your next home remodeling project.](#)



OUTLINE YOUR GOALS FOR YOUR PROJECT

Each of your goals will directly affect your budget for your project. When outlining your goals and budget for your project, it's important to have realistic expectations. The highest quality products, services, and installation will never be the least expensive option.



RESEARCH THE PRODUCTS AND SERVICES YOU ARE INTERESTED IN

Through this research, you'll begin to familiarize yourself with what specific products will align with your goals. Then, you can find the right product and contractor that will meet your needs and expectations as well as stay within your budget.



RESEARCH LOCAL CONTRACTORS IN YOUR AREA

Just like with products, it is important to have realistic expectations when choosing a contractor. The highest quality services and installation will never be the least expensive.



THINK ABOUT HOW YOU WANT TO FINANCE YOUR PROJECT

Do you want to pay for your project in full? Do you want to pay in cash? Are you looking to finance your project over months or years? Choosing the right type of financing depends first on your budget and how comfortable you are.



TURN YOUR DREAMS INTO A REALITY AND PAY FOR YOUR PROJECT COMFORTABLY

Once you outline your project goals, research what products and services you are interested in, and think about how exactly you want to finance your project, you can create the right budget for you and feel more comfortable starting your project.



WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN A HOME REMODELING CONTRACTOR

Finding a contractor for your home remodeling project is hard enough. **What's harder? Finding a contractor you can trust.** The quality of a contractor is just as important as the quality of the product.

You want to know that your contractor will provide a high-quality installation and have your back through your entire project.

Here, we'll outline [10 qualities to look for in any home remodeling contractor](#) so you can choose the right contractor you can trust.

1

THEY HAVE A BRICK-AND-MORTAR BUSINESS

You want to see that the business you are interested in has an established building they operate out of.

6

THEY PROVIDE EXPERTISE ON YOUR PROJECT

A high-quality contractor will examine the project area, talk through your goals, and provide an expert opinion and to the practicality of the project.

2

THEY HAVE A GOOD, VISIBLE ONLINE PRESENCE

If a business does not have any photos online to prove the business exists, this is a red flag. Two key things to look for online are their reviews and social media.

7

THEY SHOW REAL SAMPLES OF ALL PRODUCTS

Seeing real samples also validates whether or not the product is what you are looking for. You want to ensure the product is what you need and like.

3

THEY HAVE LONGEVITY AND CREDIBILITY

You want to hear about how long they have been in business, specifically servicing the remodel you are interested in.

8

THEY HAVE MULTIPLE INSTALLATION CREWS

This means they have established the business and are succeeding well enough to house multiple crews and keep up with the demand for installers.

4

THEY HAVE DOCUMENTATION OF ALL THEIR PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

This can include showing documentation of construction permits, certification in installing the product, and warranty documentation.

9

THEY TALK ABOUT THEIR INSTALLATION PROCESS IN DETAIL

Educate yourself on your own on some of the installation best practices so you can determine if a contractor will provide you with a high-quality result.

5

THEY HAVE PROOF OF THEIR WORK AND WHAT THEY SAY

Seeing real pictures and videos of their processes and before and after photos helps you to trust the work they do and determine if it is the service you want.

10

THEY HAVE A QUALITY WARRANTY AND SERVICE THE WARRANTY

Knowing what is included in the warranty and who is going to service it is key to choosing the right contractor that you can trust to work with.

7 QUESTIONS TO ASK A HOME REMODELING CONTRACTOR

Before going into a consultation with a home remodeling contractor, [it is important to prepare questions ahead of time](#). You want to make sure you will have all the information you need to know before making a decision.

Asking questions is important during your consultations because you want to know what to expect and what you're getting into. If you don't ask the right questions and get all of the information you need, you may be blindsided by hidden fees, faulty products, and problems with your windows in the future.

Here, we will outline 7 questions to ask a contractor during a consultation to ensure you have all the information you need and can confidently trust the contractor you work with.

1 HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN IN BUSINESS?

This is important to clearly define when asking or researching how long a window contractor has been in business.

2 DO YOU HAVE THEIR OWN INSTALLERS, AND HOW LONG HAVE THEY WORKED FOR YOU?

Having an installation team that has been with the contractor for many years proves they are trustworthy and know how to do the job right.

3 WHAT IS THE WARRANTY?

You want to ask what all is included in the warranty such as installation, hardware coverage, and what happens if anything were to go wrong.

7 HOW DO YOU HANDLE CHANGE ORDERS?

You want to know what will happen if any changes need to be made to your order. If change orders are not taken care of immediately after they have been made, your project will continue to be set back.

4 WHAT PRODUCT IS RIGHT FOR ME?

You want to make the best decision for yourself and your home, and allowing a contractor to make that decision for you may result in disappointment and possible problems you weren't expecting to run into.

6 WHAT IS THE INSTALLATION PROCESS, AND HOW LONG WILL THE INSTALLATION TAKE?

Understanding the installation process allows you to trust your contractor that they know what they are doing. The quality of the installation is just as important as the quality of the product.

5 IS THE PRICE ALL-INCLUSIVE?

If the price is not all-inclusive, a good contractor will tell you that, and they will break down the different costs of the project.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT WARRANTY

The warranty for your new product and the installation protect your new project against future defects or damages that may happen.

With each warranty, there are certain bounds you need to know to understand what damages will warrant the manufacturer or contractor to provide you with a solution, which is outlined in the warranty.

There are [three major components to a warranty that you need to know about](#): how long the warranty lasts, inclusions, and exclusions.

HOW LONG IS THE WARRANTY GOOD FOR?

The first thing you want to look at in a warranty is how long it is good for. This is a key indicator to the quality of the warranty. For example, replacement window warranties typically have a 20-year warranty for non-glass components and a 10-year warranty for glass.

The length of the warranty indicates how long that product is meant to last. This means that if you think you are overpaying for a product, and it only has a 5-year warranty, you might want to reconsider your options.

If you're looking for a high-quality product that is made to last almost a lifetime, then you will want to find a product with a warranty that reflects that lifetime.

WHAT IS INCLUDED IN THE WARRANTY?

The inclusions of a warranty are essentially what is covered. For a product, the warranty should outline the parts of that product and what certain damages warrant a repair or a replacement.

A good warranty will clearly state how the manufacturer or contractor will provide in the event of an incident or damage for specific parts of the product.

You want to know what is covered for the different parts of the product and what the manufacturer or contractor will provide for you in the event of an incident.

WHAT IS EXCLUDED IN THE WARRANTY?

The exclusions of a warranty outline what specifically does not warrant repair or replacement of the product. This can include damages due to improper installation, if the product was used against its intended purpose, or Acts of God, like tornadoes or severe storms out of human control.

It is important to understand the exclusions so you know when the product manufacturer or contractor will not provide in the event of damage.

IMPORTANT

Be sure to look at both the product warranty from the manufacturer and the contractor's warranty for installation and labor.

READY TO START YOUR NEXT HOME REMODELING PROJECT?

If you're looking for new windows, siding, doors, a concrete coating, or fresh paint on your San Antonio home's exterior, Southwest Exteriors might be the right contractor for you.

[Schedule your free, in-home consultation with an expert design consultant today](#) by filling out this form on our website.

WANT TO LEARN MORE BEFORE GETTING STARTED?

Learn more about windows, siding, and more on home remodeling through our [Learning Center](#) and the [Home Solutions Channel](#).

