



A Better Bath

You have decided to upgrade your bathroom. You have looked through magazines, visited building suppliers and browsed around at the home show. You have a fairly good idea of what you want and what new fixtures will cost. Where do you go from here?

"The next step is to contact a professional renovator," says Mike Cochren, Chair of the Canadian Renovators' Council of the Canadian Home Builders' Association. "Many people don't realize that redoing a bathroom can involve a lot more than just plumbing. An experienced renovator can explain what's required for your renovation, and how to do it right."

From stripping the existing room to doing structural, electrical and plumbing work to installing fixtures, cabinets and finishing touches, a bathroom can involve many different trades whose work must be coordinated and kept within your budget.

A professional renovator will act as the general contractor for the entire project. Established renovators have a network of experienced trades, from plumbers and electricians to floor installers. They also manage the work every step of the way. Proper scheduling minimizes the time your bathroom is out of commission.

Renovators can identify problems and solutions before the work begins: an uneven floor that results in incomplete draining of your bathtub, for instance, or rotted flooring from years of water penetration. An experienced renovator will make sure that plumbing, venting, electrical wiring and outlets, and ventilation conform to building codes in your area.

When it comes to look and style, design assistance may be less expensive than you think. You want to get the most out of your investment, both for your own convenience and enjoyment now, and on resale later.

If the renovation goes beyond a simple replacement of fixtures, talk to someone with design expertise - your renovator or a bathroom designer. A good bathroom design will reflect your needs and preferences. Good designers will begin by asking questions about your household, your daily routines and what you like and dislike.

They will take a close look at what's possible in the space available. Often the bathroom is the least interesting room in the house - a square box or a long rectangle. By using cabinets and counters of varying depth, you can create visual interest and a sense of space. Corner cabinets, showers and tubs help make the best use of limited space. Extensive use of mirrors can also open up the room.

Style and look are a personal decision, of course. Renovators may recommend that you stay with neutral colours in fixtures, like white and bone, because they are timeless and will not date your bathroom. Accent with paint, wallpaper, flooring, all items that are easy and relatively inexpensive to change later.

A bathroom renovation is your chance to get the storage space you always wanted - everything in its place and a place for everything. Consider pantry-style pull-out cupboards, tip-down laundry hampers and wall-to-wall, over-the-counter shallow cabinets with mirrored doors.

Bathroom fixtures and finishing products are available in every imaginable style and price range. Determine how much you are willing to spend and take the time to find out what's available within your budget. Established renovators know the suppliers in the area and can recommend companies for you to visit.

If it's worth doing, it's worth doing it right - work with a professional renovator!
If you have any questions or would like more information on any Renovation subject [Email Us](#).

Text provided by the CHBA and CMHC.

Your one step to a **successful** renovation!
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