



The Benefits of Hiring Professional Contractors

The DIY movement has inspired many homeowners to tackle home repair and remodeling projects on their own. DIY projects can be rewarding, and many homeowners who have embraced the DIY movement have discovered talents they never before knew they had.

But no matter how simple popular home renovation television shows make remodeling projects appear, homeowners should know that such undertakings are far more difficult than they appear on television. Homeowners who overestimate their abilities and the time they have to complete projects can cost themselves substantial amounts of money. In fact, there are a variety of reasons homeowners might want to work with professional contractors when tackling home improvement projects.

Experience

A trial and error approach can work with various projects and problems. But applying such an approach to

home improvement projects is risky and potentially dangerous, not to mention costly. Experienced professional contractors with strong track records (seek recommendations from friends or neighbors) won't have to go through trial and error and are therefore more likely than DIYers to complete a project on time and on budget.

Inspiration

One oft-overlooked benefit of working with professional contractors is the likelihood that they can draw up ideas for projects that homeowners might otherwise never have thought up on their own. Homeowners without specific ideas in mind can ask contractors to come up with various scenarios before committing to a particular one. Veteran contractors can draw on years of experience to create designs that DIYers might be incapable of coming up with and/or incapable of seeing through to completion.

Cost

Conventional wisdom suggests it's



less expensive to do something yourself than to hire someone else to do it for you, but that's not necessarily true of home improvement projects. Labor costs typically account for a substantial amount of professionally contracted projects, but homeowners can cut those costs by volunteering to do some of the simpler tasks themselves. In addition, contractors often purchase materials at a much lower cost than individual homeowners because contractors buy in bulk. So while labor costs might be lower on DIY projects, the cost of materials can offset those savings.

Resale value

Many homeowners renovate their homes with eyes on improving the

resale value of those homes. But if homeowners want to showcase a newly remodeled kitchen when selling their homes, they should be prepared for prospective buyers to ask who worked on the project. Fearing potential problems down the road, some buyers might be put off by homes that were remodeled by DIYers and not professional contractors.

Renovating a home on your own can be a rewarding project for homeowners. But it's important that homeowners recognize the many benefits of working with professional contractors before making any final decisions with regard to who will tackle their next project.

Tools Of The Home Renovator's Trade

Home renovation projects can be both exciting and tricky. Do-it-yourselfers are inspired by designs showcased in magazines, websites and their own communities. When DIY enthusiasts see a design they like, it's understandable that they may want to emulate these looks at home.

Remodeling is one of the larger DIY undertakings, and it goes beyond simple carpentry. Considering demolition, reconstruction, electrical, plumbing, and masonry work may be part of the DIY package, homeowners who are thinking about renovations must first stock up on the tools and other supplies of the trade. Having the right tools can mean the difference between a job well done and a job that needs to be redone.

Crowbar or prybar: Before you can put in new construction, you might have to get your hands dirty with some demolition. Crowbars or prybars can be used to pry up wood slats, remove nails or remove old decking.

Tool pouch: A tool and fastener pouch gives DIYers a place other than their pockets to store fasteners and hand tools. Pouches can be attached to tool belts for added storage capacity.

Stud finder: Invest in a more fool-proof method of locating studs behind drywall then knocking on the wall. Stud finders can provide a picture of studs, pipes and other hidden items inside an entire length of wall. This is essential to driving nails where they belong and can also prevent sending fasteners into wires or nearby plumbing.

Level: A level is an essential tool for everyone from casual decorators to more involved renovators. Whether hanging pictures or ensuring molding is parallel, levels are must-have tools for DIYers.

Safety glasses: Invest in a pair of safety glasses so no one working on a project deals with obstructed vision. Safety glasses also provide ample eye protection.

Extension cords: If power tools are part of the renovation picture, extension cords can safely extend power where it is needed. Be sure to invest in a gauge that is large enough to handle the amperage of your most powerful tool.

Measuring tape: The "measure twice, cut once" mantra is key to home improvements. To measure accurately each and every time, no tool chest is complete without a sturdy measuring tape.

Ladder varieties: Home improvements aren't always at ground level. Purchase ladders of various heights so you can safely reach various areas of the home and avoid injury. Step stools, a step ladder and an extension ladder all have their purposes on the job.

Digital inspection scope: A scope lets you see inside walls, floors and ceilings to find the exact location of pipes, wires and joists. It also can be used to seek out the source of clogged drains or anywhere you desire sight into hard-to-manuever areas.

In addition to these tools, brooms, shop-vacs, hammers, screwdrivers, wrenches and pliers can complete a DIYer's basic toolbox.

How To Fix That Sticking Door

Nearly everyone has experienced a sticking door that just will not close properly. This problem may become more noticeable when temperatures rise and humidity contributes to the swelling of wood doors and frames.

According to The Family Handyman, a home improvement resource, the standard remedy for alleviating a sticking door is to remove the door and pare down the edges that are rubbing so that the door will once again swing freely. While this can solve the problem, it can be a hassle, as it requires refinishing the pared-down edge and rehanging the door. Try these shortcuts first before creating more work than might be necessary.

Identify the problem area and rub it with a dry bar of soap. This should reduce friction and allow the door to close more easily.

Remove humidity with a dehumidifier or by running an air conditioning unit.

Check for loose hinges or sagging around the hinge. Tighten the fasteners to sure up the door and create better alignment.

Spray the hinges with lubricant if you suspect sticking is originating because of squeaky hinges.

Look for obstructions at the bottom of the door. Is the door dragging on carpeting or being caught on something on the floor? It may be a matter of simply clearing away the obstruction.



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