

## Remodeling your bathroom By Mary Hart

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Your bathroom should be the cleanest room in your house – you shower there, so it stands to reason that you’d want it to be as clean and new as possible. No one wants to take a shower or a bath in a rusty, old tub, and the first renovation that almost all homeowners do when they buy a house is to replace at least the toilet seat if not the whole toilet. Remodeling your bathroom is a great investment if you’re looking to sell your house down the road. The National Association of Realtors found in a Cost vs. Value Report in 2005 that the return on a bathroom remodel was 102 percent – not shabby at all!

So, where should you start in remodeling your bathroom? “There are many different aspects and levels of bath remodels, says Chuck O’Hanlon, Owner/Designer at Derry Kitchen and Bath. “Vanities and toilets are the most popular aspects of bath remodeling, as they are the easiest pieces to change and are often available in stock sizes. One-piece vanity tops are very popular – they allow for easy cleaning and there is no rim around the sink that is caulked in. Comfort height (taller) vanities and toilets are also becoming more popular.”

When you’re considering remodeling your bathroom, you need to figure out what aspects of your bathroom most need improvement, and consider your budget. “Tub and shower replacements are usually the most involved and costly, says O’Hanlon. “Costs for replacing a shower or tub can range from \$1,000 to \$3,000, including labor. However, keep in mind that replacing that old blue or green tub can give your bathroom a whole new look.”

In the process of renovating your bathroom, you can simply replace fixtures, or gut the whole bathroom right down to studs, moving drains and supplies. “A total gut and new fixtures, flooring and electrical can run from \$15,000 and up,” says O’Hanlon, “while simply replacing fixtures can be done for \$1,500 to \$5,000 depending on the cabinetry and fixtures you choose.”

Ready to toss your hands up in the air at the thought of those costs? You can still have the bathroom of your dreams in an inexpensive manner and “keep your costs down by using stock sizes in cabinetry, counters, etc.,” says O’Hanlon. “You’ll find that the least expensive fixtures are white and chrome. This allows you to bring in other colors into your bathroom by accessorizing using hand towels, paint and flooring materials. White fixtures are usually in stock and available in a few days, while special order colors are usually more money and take a longer time to come in -- sometimes up to eight weeks.”

Looking for the latest and greatest in bathroom remodels? Consider custom shower surrounds, multiple shower heads and body sprays. There are also a variety of different colors and finishes available for fixtures. “New in fixtures are biscuit fixtures and the latest finishes for faucets and shower components are brushed nickel, oil rubbed bronze, and French gold,” says O’Hanlon. “All of these are more expensive than the standard chrome or white fixtures, but they do add to the overall picture in your remodel.”

For more information, the design staff at Derry Kitchen and Bath, 603-437-5599, [derrykitchen.com](http://derrykitchen.com) can help you coordinate and choose styles and colors for your bathroom remodeling project.