



Do not try this at home: DIY Mistakes to Avoid

Spring is around the corner, so you might be motivated to tackle a household project that you've been avoiding all winter long. Regular household chores such as changing air filters or replacing lightbulbs are low cost and easy ways to keep your home running optimally. If you're preparing to take on a bigger project, you may want to take an honest assessment of what you can accomplish or if you should hire a professional remodeler. Poorly executed 'do-it-yourself' projects can not only damage your home, but depending on the task, you can put yourself at a safety risk. Before you dive into your next DIY project, consider the following.

- **Budgeting** - Home projects can really add up if you avoid mapping out all the materials, tools and equipment needed to complete your project. If you are not a home remodeling professional, chances are you will not purchase exactly everything you need the first time you go shopping. A good rule of thumb is to budget for at least a 10 percent overage for project materials.
- **Permits** - Adding a wall or a deck? You might need a permit to complete your project. If you are not sure, contact your local city hall. Not all permits are intended to drain your home remodeling budget or serve as a roadblock to building, in many cases it is to ensure the job is done correctly. Avoiding this step can yield negative consequences such as being ordered by the city to stop work and paying hefty fines. Professional remodelers are knowledgeable about the permitting process.
- **Tools and Equipment** - If you're a home owner, you likely have at least one tool to manage small home repairs. New home projects may require specialized tools or equipment outside of your usual toolbox. Specific tools can make the difference for making the job easier, safer and avoiding damage to your home. Some specialized equipment can be costly for a single use. Hardware stores often have tools available to rent but make sure you know how to use it to avoid injuring yourself or ruining your project.
- **Materials and Measurements** - One of the attractive parts of DIY projects is saving money on labor costs. Should you also save money on materials? The cheaper option when buying materials for your home may not always be the best one. Installing or replacing materials with flimsy or ill-fitting items not measured correctly can cost more money in the long run. If you work with a professional remodeler, he or she will be able to recommend the most cost-effective materials to complete your project.

Completing a home project can be rewarding with the careful preparation or with the right contractor. Make sure to also download our Checklist for finding and hiring the RIGHT contractor.

**For more information on home renovations, referrals for trade professionals or
any other questions please contact the Builders Association at 814-833-3999.**