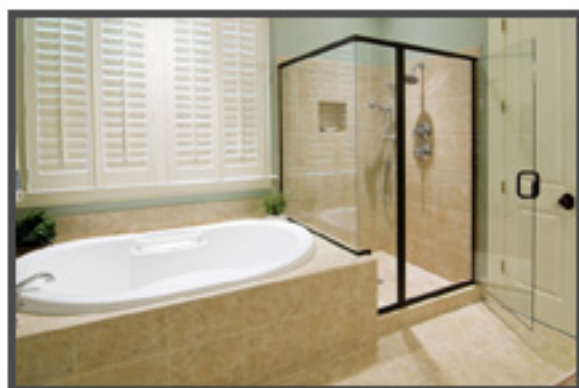


## Updating A Bath Can Be Good Investment

Considering a bathroom remodel? Estimating your costs up-front can help you choose between a painting update, a renovation or a remodeling job down to the studs.

And if you're remodeling with a return on investment in mind, you may want an idea of how much of your investment you'll recoup.



With a minor investment in paint and some sweat equity, painting a bathroom is a quick, easy and inexpensive way to update a bath. The cost may total a few hundred dollars, more if you hire someone to do your painting for you. But for under \$400 (depending on the size of the bathroom), you will probably recover your financial investment.

As your project gets more complicated and more costly, the return may be less predictable. A renovation typically involves the removal of old plumbing fixtures and the installation of contemporary ones. Usually included are a new floor and new paint. This level of work can cost approximately \$10,000, according to UpscaleRemodeling.com.



For a total bathroom remodel, costs can range from \$15,000 to as high as \$30,000, depending on the level of fixtures and amenities. It will probably be necessary to hire a contractor to handle the various stages of the job, including electrical, plumbing, carpentry, tile and drywall. New materials could include a shower enclosure or bathtub spa, ceramic tile, new toilet, sink and vanity, or perhaps a steam shower.

What return on investment can a homeowner expect? The rule of thumb has been that bathroom and kitchen upgrades do increase the value of a home, and may help its marketability. Homeowners often achieve a return of close to 85 percent when renovating

a bathroom. But location, geography, market conditions and a buyer's preferences will all have an impact on that figure.

An important consideration in proceeding with any construction project is who may eventually buy the home. Couples with children typically want a bathroom with a tub, while older people may prefer a shower enclosure that can be accessed without stepping over a barrier. Most couples also want to have two sinks in the master bathroom. It may be hard to determine in advance who may purchase the home, but your neighborhood may dictate its desirability for families or those ready to retire.

City codes are also an issue and electrical and plumbing systems may need to be brought up to code. And keep in mind, all outlets within a few feet from a water source, such as faucets or a tub, should have a ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI outlet).



While weighing a variety of factors, don't leave out your own considerations. Are you creating a master bath, children's bath or guest bath? Do you want to create a separate shower and bathing area? What range of activities will take place in the bathroom such as make-up and hair care, showering, bathing, dressing, relaxing? How many outlets will you need and for what appliances? While you may not want to over-spend on your project, it pays to create a room the entire family can enjoy.