

INTERIOR DESIGN IT'S SPRING - DO YOU HAVE THE RENOVATION ITCH?



8 Hidden Renovation Costs Contractors Say Can Drain Your Budget

Contractors agree on one thing: even the best-planned renovation comes with surprises. So setting aside 10–15% of your total budget for the unexpected—because those “small” extras add up fast. Here are the costs homeowners most often overlook.

Permits and Inspections

Local permits, zoning approvals, and required inspections can stack up quickly. In areas with strict review boards or variance requirements, delays or failed inspections can push costs even higher. Clear this with your architect early so you know the process, timeline, and fees.

Code-Required Upgrades

Once walls open up, outdated wiring, plumbing, or structural elements often need to be brought up to current code. These fixes aren't optional if you want to pass inspection, and they can significantly shift your budget.

Unplanned Repairs

Hidden damage—like rot, termite issues, or evidence of poor past renovations—often doesn't reveal itself until demolition begins. A contingency fund helps soften the blow when these surprises surface.

Material Delivery and Delays

Delivery fees for large or specialty materials can be substantial. And if materials arrive late, your project timeline may stretch, increasing labor costs.

Design Changes

Mid-project inspiration can be expensive. Once drawings are approved, altering the plan triggers change orders, added labor, and schedule delays. Sticking to the original scope is almost always the cheaper path.

Waste Removal

Dumpster rentals, hauling fees, and disposal charges for old materials can add hundreds—or thousands—to a large renovation. Review these costs with your contractor before work begins.

Post-Construction Cleanup and Landscaping

Once the dust settles, you'll still need to clean the home and repair any yard damage caused by heavy equipment or foot traffic. Fresh sod or landscaping touch-ups are common end-of-project expenses.

Temporary Living Costs

If your kitchen or bedroom becomes unusable, you may need a hotel, short-term rental, or extra meals out. Pet boarding and storage units can also sneak into the budget.

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