



Getting Started Remodeling Tips

First Things Should Always Come First! Find a Contractor.

- **Begin with a plan.** Determine what you want to accomplish with your space. Draw ideas from consumer magazines, friends and neighbors, home improvement centers and, of course a contractor.
- **Have a budget in mind.** Have some idea as to how much you want to spend. Is it \$1,000 or \$10,000? This preliminary budget will help you work with a contractor to determine whether the project can be completed to your satisfaction. After all, if you want a dream master bath but have only \$1,500 to spend, it is likely that you will not only be disappointed with the project but disappointed with the contractor as well.
- **Do your homework.** Think through what you want to accomplish and be sure that you are willing to live with the invasion of your home or office for a period of time while craftsman are working to help you realize your dreams. Know that there will be some dust, some daily mess and some disruption to your schedule. Decide how you want to provide access to your home or office on a daily basis while the carpenters, plumbers, electricians and others are plying their trades.
- **Find a professional contractor.** Find a contractor who is familiar with your area and its building codes. Research the local NARI or Home Builder Association chapters (they all have websites) to locate member contractors for they subscribe to sets of business practices and a code of ethics designed to protect you, the consumer.
- **Find a well-regarded contractor.** Check out the local Better Business Bureau to see whether your prospective contractor has any unresolved complaints. You can also have confidence in rating organizations like Angie's List where contractors and other service providers are rated by member consumers like you.
- Invite two or three contractors to discuss your project. It is always better to have two or three proposals for comparison for your planned work. Inviting more than three contractors is likely a waste of your time and theirs. Secure their ideas and ask for their thoughts on how you might best implement your thoughts and ideas.
- **What to look for in a contractor?** Look for one who arrives in a clean and well-ordered vehicle and presents a clean, pleasant and professional appearance. Did he/she provide you with a business card? Watch for a contractor that seems to respect you and your property. Look for signs in the contractor who seems to have creativity, enthusiasm, interest in your project (as evidenced by being a good listener), multiple ideas about how you might best accomplish your wishes and who asks good questions and takes good notes. Perhaps most important, are you comfortable in your preliminary meeting with the contractor and do you believe that you will be able to maintain a good and proper working relationship over the course of the prospective project?



6736 Eastgate Drive • Mayfield Village, Ohio 44143-2302
OFFICE: 440-446-8000 • FAX: 440-446-8075 • MOBILE: 440-668-2400
fred@FourSquareRestorations.com • www.FourSquareRestorations.com



- **How will you communicate with your contractor?** Does your prospective contractor have a business card with a permanent address? Does your prospective contractor have a cellular number so that he/she may be reached during the day? What about a website or e-mail capability?
- **Check out the contractors' references.** Has the contractor performed your general type of work before? Does the firm have references that you can check? Ask whether the contractor has a website or a portfolio of past projects that you can review.
- **What is the contractor's orientation to your notion of quality?** Does the contractor seem to have a compatible sense of quality that meets your standards? If your desire is to rebuild a bathroom at a budget-conscious, functional level, does your prospective contractor understand that you do not want to outfit your new bath space with a Jacuzzi and granite? Or contrarily, if you are planning a new master suite with a luxury bath, does your prospective contractor have access to and experience with high-end materials like granite, jetted tubs and custom-crafted cabinetry.



6736 Eastgate Drive • Mayfield Village, Ohio 44143-2302
OFFICE: 440-446-8000 • FAX: 440-446-8075 • MOBILE: 440-668-2400
fred@FourSquareRestorations.com • www.FourSquareRestorations.com