

# DESIGN AND REMODELING

## trends

# bathrooms

## Remodeling One of the Smallest Rooms in the Home

The biggest challenge in remodeling a bathroom is figuring out how to make one of the smallest rooms in your home functional, beautiful and comfortable all at the same time.

### Half Bath / Powder Room

Just like the name suggests, a half bath contains only a toilet and a sink. It's accessible to guests, but not used for daily functions like washing faces or brushing teeth. So designing half baths can be more about style than function.

Some questions to consider:

- **What is your personal home design style?** Whether it's contemporary, traditional, country or environmentally friendly, your style will influence the types of lighting, plumbing fixtures, sinks and toilets you can choose from.
- **What type of storage do you need?** Sometimes people like to have extra storage, which will dictate whether you need a vanity cabinet or a pedestal sink.

### Full Bath

Full baths are high-traffic areas. They're used by children, overnight guests, and for homes without a master bath it can become a whole family affair! Therefore they must work for everyone - sometimes at the same time! Some questions to consider:

- **How many people will use the bath at one time?**

This determines whether there is a need for isolated toilet or tub areas. Jack-and-Jill baths allow everyone to have their own personal storage and ideally separate sinks.

- **Who uses the bath, and how old are they?** If you have small children or older parents, reaching sink faucets can be an issue. Instead of step stools, consider multi-level vanity countertops so they're accessible for everyone.

### Master Bath / Spa

One of the most important things to consider in planning a master bath or suite is space. Two people need to maneuver comfortably, which often involves expanding the room by adding on or stealing space from existing rooms.

Some questions to consider:

- **What types of activities will take place in the space?** By identifying the functions of each area - bathing, grooming, makeup application, dressing or even laundry - you can decide the overall layout, types of furniture and fixtures needed.
- **What type of storage do you need?** This will help you choose items that will keep the space as open as possible. In small spaces you can use wall hung vanities to visually extend the floor space or frameless glass shower enclosures so you're not building any walls to close in the feeling of openness.

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# trends in *bath design*

It's a mad, crazy world out there, and home design trends have changed to accommodate today's fast-paced lifestyle. Designs that are calm, relaxing and comforting are combined with modern conveniences. Here are some of the trends that remodelers are using to create stress-reducing sanctuaries:

## color palettes: bright is out, light is in

Color is the easiest way to create a soothing environment. For example, seeing the color blue actually causes the body to produce chemicals that are calming. So choose palettes of beige, white, olive, blue and other neutral or light colors. They're easy to match with many different styles, which is good for a high return on investment when you sell.

## vessel sinks

One of the newest trends in fixtures, vessel sinks are actually based on a centuries-old design. Chinese basins that were used in the days before running water are getting a contemporary twist with various shapes, sizes and materials. And traditional rules for matching the color of your sink with your bathtub and toilet are out. Now you can mix things up with cast iron, glass, natural stone and bronze.

## bring the outdoors in with lighting

No more harsh artificial light, natural is the way to go. If the remodel allows for structural changes, solatubes or large windows with sleek pane-free designs are perfect for admitting lots of natural light. For nighttime or supplemental lighting, use fixtures with soft light and dimming switches – perfect for a long soak in the tub without the hazards of candles.

## keep it light and airy with frameless showers

Building walls to create a shower can close in a space. Frameless glass shower walls and doors make the most of every square foot and even make the room appear larger.

## textured tile

If you're using a neutral color palette, unique tile textures can add dimension. If you're looking for luxury, imported marble is quite elegant; however, mosaic, granite, glass and mother-of-pearl tiles are beautiful options without breaking the bank. For a modern twist on a traditional room, set the tiles in a staggered pattern.

## go green in more ways than one

Obviously, if you're looking to lower utilities or reduce your environmental impact, there are tons of environmentally friendly fixtures such as on-demand hot water heaters, low-flow toilets and specialized shower heads and faucets. But you can also go green by reusing original antiques or traditional pieces from flea markets and antique stores that have been updated or restored to their former beauty.

## heated floors are hot

Comfort is key, and no one likes cold feet when they're relaxing in their bathroom sanctuary. Heated floors are a welcome luxury, especially with cold tile in the middle of winter. Plus you can install heated floors just in high traffic areas to save cost.



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# CARPENTER'S CORNER

*maintaining quality on a tight time frame*

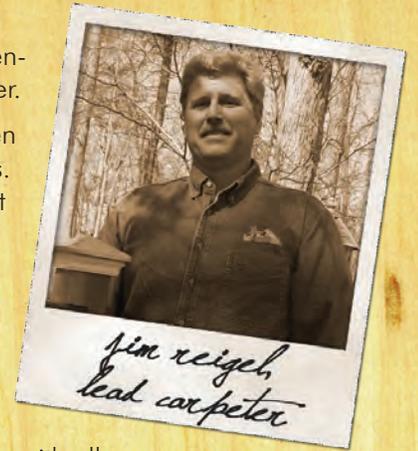
When I'm on a jobsite, it's much easier to maintain quality when I have plenty of time to pay attention to the details. But this wasn't the case when I was working on a kitchen remodel last December.

The kitchen had to be finished in time for Christmas, which meant I had to demo the entire kitchen and install the new floors, cabinetry, countertops, appliances and fixtures in less than 24 days. Because we had such a tight time frame, I couldn't follow my normal process, but I also couldn't cut corners. I still had to give the client the quality work and clean job site they were looking for.

The first thing I did was advance planning. Normally I plan a week at a time, but I had to plan several weeks all at once. It made a difference because before we even started I identified a critical point that we need to work around. Our client wanted a beautiful granite countertop, which takes several weeks to come in. So I knew I had to plan everything around the countertops.

At BRHI, we have a lead carpenter on the job each day, which allows us to be in constant communication with the client, our office staff and our subcontractors. Each day, I was communicating with all the different parts to make sure we identified and fixed problems before they became an issue. I also set our subcontractors up to win. By pre-planning and preparing the site for them, our subs were able to come in and do their job quickly and efficiently.

By Christmas, we were able to give the client a complete turnkey product in just three weeks, but we were still able to pay attention to the little details. For example, we finished the tops of all the cabinets, since the home had a catwalk that looked down on the kitchen. That way the kitchen had a polished, finished look from every angle.



*"The tops of cabinets look fabulous from upstairs. I am surprised at what a difference it makes and am glad you were able to have Jim take care of this for us."  
- Refekah Paulson*



## seasonal home improvement tips

- Thoroughly clean all surfaces in the house including light fixtures, ceiling fans, walls and hard to reach corners.
- Identify the small things like leaky faucets or loose cabinet doors. Hire a BRHI handyman to make all repairs at the same time to save money and avoid multiple visits.
- Have the air conditioner or evaporative cooler serviced and replace all filters. A new air conditioner can last 12 – 15 years if proper maintenance is conducted. An annual inspection can catch things like leaks, dirty filters and worn belts — all of which can compromise durability and efficiency.



You're like family to us, so we want to help you out!

Got some small repair items that need fixin' around the house? Give us a call and we'll send someone you trust, a BRHI carpenter, to help with your to-do list!

# DESIGN & REMODELING

*trends*

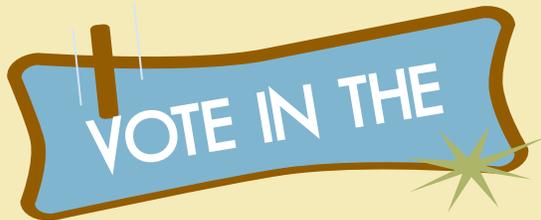
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## PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATIONS & MEMBERSHIPS



# The ugly BATHROOM CONTEST

Who Will Win? You Can Help One Lucky Person Win a Complete Bathroom Makeover

### How to Vote:

1. Go to [www.facebook.com/blueridgehomeimprovement](http://www.facebook.com/blueridgehomeimprovement) and click on the Ugly Bathroom Contest tab to vote online.
2. Join us at the Home Expo at the Christiansburg Recreation Center, Booth #101 to vote in person. You could win an iPad2 at the show!



Friday, March 9: 4 p.m. - 8 p.m.  
Saturday, March 10: 9 a.m. - 7 p.m.  
Sunday, March 11: 12 p.m. - 5 p.m.  
Ticket Price: \$4; Children ages 18 & under FREE



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