

iPlanner: kitchen remodel

information . insights . inspiration



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How To Use This iPlanner

Remodeling a kitchen will require making many choices. For example, what color, type of wood, style do you want your new cabinets to be? Do you want a stainless undermount sink or a Farmhouse style sink? Just to name-a-few! It can be a challenge to keep everything in focus when you look at the big picture of your remodeling project. This iPlanner will help you see what all of your options are so you can make choices that fit your lifestyle and budget.

Go ahead and print out a copy of this iPlanner and place it in a bi-fold or 3 ring binder that can also hold pictures clipped from magazines, product brochures and paint color chips. When you meet with us (or any other contractor) you will be able to share what your choices are, thus allowing for clearer communication about the scope and cost of the project.

Inside the iPlanner, we have provided some cost indicators as marked by \$ signs.

\$\$= Deluxe Cost. Some customization of installations.

\$\$\$= Upscale. High quality products used. More hands on installations.

\$\$\$\$= High End Cost. Premium products. Fully customized, May involve complex installations.

An example of this is shown below.

You need to select a countertop material and installation

Post-formed formica countertop. This is a type of countertop with a built-in low rise backsplash. It is typically available in limited colors and lengths. Installation is usually simple. Sink has to be an overmount style where the lip of the sink sits on top of the counter material. The cost indicator for this type of counter is **\$\$**.

Custom quartz countertop. Also known as engineered quartz which is made by mixing resin, crushed quartz and other materials and then baking and cooling. The slabs are then cut to size, cleaned and polished then delivered to the jobsite. They are then installed with great skill especially at any seams. Typically an undermount sink is used for a cleaner look. The cost indicator for this type of countertop is **\$\$\$\$**

On page 9 are insights and on page 10 a checklist that will assist you in selecting the right person or company to remodel your kitchen.

Page 11 and 12 provide insights into the real costs of remodeling.

On page 13 are resources for products and ideas and on page 14, five tips on how to have a smoother remodeling experience.

It's my hope that you find using this iPlanner informative and useful in surviving the chaos of remodeling your home.

Do you store food away from the kitchen? Yes No If yes, where? _____

Do you need storage for brooms-vacuum-ironing equipment? Yes No

Features (Check all that apply)

Which of the following would you like to see in your new kitchen?

- Pantry \$\$\$ Rollout Shelves \$\$\$ Tall Utility Cabinet \$\$ Silverware Dividers \$\$
- Vegetable storage \$\$ Tray Storage \$\$ Bottle Storage \$\$ Bulk Storage \$\$
- Divided Drawers \$\$ Mixing Stand \$\$\$ Sink Door Storage \$\$ Appliance Garage \$\$
- Open shelves \$\$ Pull-out trash \$\$ Recycle bins \$\$ Lazy Susan \$\$
- Large storage drawers \$\$\$ Fixed island \$\$\$\$ Mobile island \$\$ _____

Electrical: (Check all that apply)

Lighting

- Surface mount \$ Under cabinet lights \$\$ Wall sconces \$\$
- Recessed ceiling lights \$\$\$ Suspended lighting \$\$\$

Outlets-Switches

- Update/Install GFCI Add more outlets Add more switches

Venting

- Reuse Upgrade Over cooktop Over island Under microwave

Fixtures: (Check all that apply)

Sinks:

- Number 1 2 3 Undermount sink \$\$\$ Farmers sink \$\$\$ Top mount sink \$\$
- Cast iron Sink \$\$\$ Solid surface sink \$\$\$ Stainless steel sink \$\$ Other _____

Type of Faucet:

- Single handle with sidespray \$ Single handle with pull down \$\$\$ Pot filler \$\$\$
 Wall mounted \$\$\$ Entertainment sink style \$\$\$

Metal Finishes:

- Chrome \$ Stainless \$\$ Brushed Nickel \$\$\$ Oil rub bronze \$\$\$ Other_____

Woodwork

Cabinets

- Stock \$ Semi-custom \$\$\$ Custom \$\$\$\$

Door Style

- Raised panel Shaker Flat Beadboard Inset Other_____

Wood Finish

- Painted Stained Melamine Thermofoil

Preferred Style

- Ultra Modern Contemporary Traditional Beach Cottage Other _____

Preferred Colors

- Neutral Pastels Whites Brights Wood Other_____

Countertops

- Formica \$\$ Solid Surface \$\$\$ Granite \$\$\$ Quartz \$\$\$ Other_____

Wood Trim & Doors

- Replace door, window and baseboard trim. Replace hinges and door handles
- Install pocket door system \$\$\$
- Replace doors Flat 4 panel 6 panel Other_____
- Replace exterior window(s) Replace exterior door
- Replace/add ceiling molding
- Paint wood trim Stain wood trim

Coverings:

Flooring

- Vinyl \$ Laminate \$\$ Ceramic tile \$\$\$ Wood \$\$\$ Stone \$\$\$\$

Backsplash

- Ceramic tile \$\$ Solid surface \$\$\$ Stone \$\$\$\$ Decorative/Accent Tile \$\$\$
- Painted beadboard \$\$

Wall/Ceilings

- Replace wall board Replace ceiling board

Appliances

- Reuse New
- Cooktop Range Dishwasher Dish drawer Wall oven
- Countertop Microwave Over range microwave Trash compactor Vent hood

Other Options:

- Velux sun tunnel \$\$\$
- Electric heated floor \$\$\$
- Replace baseboard heat covers \$\$
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

What the 3 most important things you want to accomplish with your new kitchen

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Notes:

Selecting The Right Person To Remodel Your Kitchen

When it comes to remodeling your home, you will have many choices of expertise, experience, ability to perform and different levels of overhead to choose from.

The guy with truck and dog.

The local handyman

The hands-on-professional craftsman

The large company with sales staff, support staff, field staff and subcontractors

The commercial firms with staffing in the hundreds

In my experience, there are really only 2 factors that people (considering remodeling) will use to decide which person or company to go with when considering remodeling their home. One is price and the other is comfort level.

ARE YOU PRICE DRIVEN?

If you are selecting a company primarily because they have the lowest price, you may instinctually know that you are assuming greater risk and realize that you are going to have to put up with a lot of headache and hassle to get what you want. And even then, you know that the products used and the work performed may or may not be acceptable. Going through this process is acceptable to most people looking to maximize their dollars.

On the other hand, people will sometimes select the company with the highest price simply with the rationale that if their price is the highest, they must be really good. Sometimes, and sometimes not.

And some will go with the lowest price because it's all they can afford. However in the long run it can end up costing you more. Yes, you might be able to put up with the stress and hassle of trying to keep a project moving forward and dealing with numerous issues that come up. You might even be willing to pitch in and do some of the work if necessary. However, will you have the financial backup to handle cost overruns because something was over looked and wasn't in the paperwork? (Assuming that the person you hire even has a contract.) Will you be able to replace the inexpensive (Read cheap) fixtures in 1 to 2 years when they start to fail? If you have to choose a company solely on price, be sure to have at least 30% of your budget set aside for surprises and be prepared to revisit portions of your project down the road which will cost you more money.

IS COMFORT MORE IMPORTANT?

For many, they will decide to go with someone because it feels right and because they are comfortable with the person that they are talking with about their project. Yet, the level of comfort is usually created by actions taken, confidence expressed and promises kept.

On the following page is a list of things that most people will find create a high comfort level. As you are talking with and evaluating people or companies for your upcoming project, keep this list handy as a sort of check list to help guide your decision making.

Contractor Checklist:

- Shows up on time or called if going to be late for your appointment.
- Asks questions, listens to you and takes notes.
- Says hello to other members of your family including pets.
- Dress is neat and clean.
- Provides design ideas.
- Is knowledgeable about construction practices.
- Suggests viable solutions for your project.
- Has written references with names and telephone numbers.
- Explains how work will be done and how the impact of project on you is minimized.
- Provides details on materials and products used and why.
- Provides an example of and uses a written contract.
- Has a written guarantee.
- Discusses project costs.
- Explains level of involvement in project. Hands-on?
- Has a fixed quote guarantee.
- Will bring experienced trade partners to your project.
- Does not subcontract all work.
- Shows proof of insurance and license information.
- Easy to talk to.
- _____

Question: Why Is Remodeling Expensive?

Answer: Operating Costs. Custom. Quality. Regulations.

Owning and operating a small business is an expensive endeavor and profit margins are often tight. Many people do not realize, that for any remodeling company, any profit on a project can be eaten up by underestimating labor or having an “oh no” moment on a project. Especially for those companies that provide a fixed quote for a project and will only ask for more money from a client in extreme cases.

In the marketplace, there is a misconception that remodeling only has 2 cost components. Labor and materials. There is however, operating costs, customization, level of quality and regulatory compliance costs that have to be accounted for.

OPERATING COSTS Simply put, this is money expended every single day to ensure that someone answers and returns your phone calls or emails. Money spent so that someone can come to your house to discuss your project, do research, make numerous phone calls and expend hours writing up proposals and cost assessments. These costs are spent on every sales opportunity and have to be recovered over the course of many projects. Many remodeling companies will spend up to an estimated \$600 per prospect meeting with them, developing ideas and proposal for just a small bathroom remodel. **That's why in remodeling, there is no such thing as “Free” estimates!** In addition to the costs outlined above, there are the normal costs of doing business such as insurances, rent or mortgage payments, vehicle costs including purchase, maintenance and replacement, tool and equipment costs, professional services and more.

CUSTOM. No two remodeling projects are alike. Different layouts. Different houses, some remodeled or “remuddled” in the past. Some not. Some meet or exceed building code, many don't. In remodeling, many projects will require extensive re-working and often require on-site problem solving to meet the goals of the project.

Here is an example of a project requiring custom work: Installing a vent hood over an island.

1. Determine the existing conditions and what will be needed to complete the project.
2. Select, purchase and deliver to the site all of the required components.
3. Open up ceiling as required to create pathway for vent hood.
4. Relocate as needed wood beams to accommodate ductwork.
5. Install blocking to support weight of vent hood.
6. Install duct work to exterior wall or up through roof.
7. Install exterior vent hood on on wall.
8. Replace sidewall as required.
9. If hood is vented through roof, remove roof shingles, install flashing and then vent hood.
10. Replace roof shingles as required.
11. Install vent hood and level as required.
12. Electrician wires up power direct to unit from service panel.
13. Replace wall and ceiling coverings as required.
14. Tape & mud all seams on replacement coverings.
15. Sand and clean up all wall and ceiling patches.
16. Prime and paint as required to blend wall and ceilings.

17. Install makeup air unit if required by code.
18. Electrician wires up make up air.
19. Patch-Sand-Prime and paint areas affected by makeup air installation.
20. Clean up workspace as required.

This project will require the services of a carpenter, electrician, and a painter to complete. Additional customization would be required with difficult installs. All of the steps above, add up to a significant number of hours needed to complete the project. Plus the assorted materials and fixtures needed to properly install a vent hood and make up air unit if required by code.

QUALITY comes from doing the little things that make a better project. Quality comes from taking extra steps and extra time to make things just so. An example of this can be seen in the above example: Taking time to level the shower base extensively rather than dropping it into place and going to the next step. Or providing the extra effort to ensure the walls are flat and consistent before installing the cement board. Quality comes from taking the time to cover floors and furniture with protective covers before commencing work. Quality is taking the time to keep homeowners “In the loop” and communicating regularly about the project. All the above steps and effort take time. And time equates money in our society.

Quality also comes from using the right products on your project. Case in point, you could choose inexpensive cabinets from a big box store over the semi-custom all wood cabinets. In a few years, you will need to replace the inexpensive cabinets and end up paying more for their removal and replacement than if you had chosen the quality cabinet line from the outset.

REGULATION. In recent years, many new laws and regulations have been implemented and compliance has a direct impact on the cost of remodeling. Below is an overview of some of the changes.

EPA and many states are now enforcing a lead safe renovation law that applies to all trades and requires extensive containment measures even for simple window and door replacement projects for any house built before 1978.

Numerous changes in the building codes have impacted project costs. Some examples: Bathrooms now require direct exterior mechanical venting. Electrical outlets are now required to be the more expensive arc fault resistant type in all new installations. Arc fault prevents the little spark you see when unplugging a device. Many projects, especially along the coast line, now require higher standards of construction to resist the forces of nature and ensure longevity.

IT ALL ADDS UP, all of the factors mentioned above, operating costs, custom, quality and regulation combined have a significant impact on the total cost of remodeling your home. Yes, it's possible to keep a firm rein on costs. However, there is a very fine line between cost-cutting and cutting corners. Don't fall into the trap of trying to save pennies that will only result in costing you dollars later.

Useful Resources:

Online:

Remodeling Costs: You can see the costs of remodeling on a wide range of remodeling projects which is compiled annually by Remodeling Magazine. A highly regarded resource for many professionals in the trades. Go online here: www.remodeling.hw.net/2010/costvsvalue/national.aspx

Kitchen Fixtures:

www.us.kohler.com
www.moen.com
www.americanstandard.com
www.groheamerica.com
www.sterlingplumbing.com

Cabinets

www.cabico.com
www.norcraftcabinetry.com
www.canyoncreek.com

Countertops:

www.corian.com
www.swanstone.com
www.cambriausa.com
www.silestoneusa.com

Tile-Wall & Floor:

www.daltile.com
www.crossvilleinc.com

Beadboard

www.beadboard.com

Lighting

www.rejuvenation.com/
www.vtforge.com
www.lightinguniverse.com

Knobs and Handles

www.hardwarehut.com

Neat Kitchen Stuff...

www.restorationhardware.com

Brick & Mortar: Call ahead for directions and hours.

Fixture Showrooms

Ferguson Route 28, Mashpee: 508.539.8704
Supply New England Dillingham Ave, Falmouth: 508.457.9720
Supply New England Aarons Way, West Yarmouth: 508.775.5818
Simons Supply Higgins Crowell Road, West Yarmouth: 508.775.0740
FW Webb Breeds Hill Rd, Hyannis: 508.775.3890
The Bath Splash Showroom CIT Ave. Hyannis: 508.775.4115

Countertops

Coastal-N-Counters Route 28 Mashpee: 508.539.3500
Atlantic Marble & Granite 59 Technology Park Drive, East Falmouth: 508.540.9770

Tile & Flooring

J & K Flooring Route 28, Mashpee: 508.477.4080
Carpet Barn Route 28, Mashpee: 508.477.7847
Carpet Barn Main Street, Falmouth: 508.548.1443
Carpet Barn Enterprise Road, Hyannis: 508.775.5711
Carpet Barn Main Street, Dennisport 508.398.4784

Cabinets & Custom Woodworking

Classic Woodworks Route 28A Cataumet, 508.563.9922

5 Tips For a Smoother Project:

1. Have A Budget.

And share that budget with your contractor. Why? Because if you don't, they will be simply guessing at what you want or can afford. In some cases, the contractor will come back with a quote or estimate that is too high. In other instances they will come back with a low price but then you want to choose better quality materials or the contractor left many things out. Or they put an allowance on everything. (Note: Allowances in many cases, are guesses at what something might cost.) Taking this approach can lead to misunderstandings and conflict.

Do your research*, decide what you can afford and then simply tell your contractor what the range is that you can afford. They will be able to tell you up front if you are in the same ballpark as they are. If they start to get too excited, your budget might be generous.

*At the top of page 13 of this iPlanner, is an online resource of actual remodeling costs that can help you determine your budget.

An added benefit of having a budget is in preventing the scope of the project from expanding unintentionally beyond what you can afford or want to invest in your home.

2. Understand That The Project Will Have Highs And Lows.

There will be days that you will come home delighted to see progress made and everything coming together and then there will be days when no one seemingly shows up or disaster strikes. Relax, take a deep breath because if you have done your due diligence, your contractor should have things well in hand and kept you in the loop. Yes, the project will be chaotic and messy at times yet in the end worth it.

3. Have Reasonable Expectations.

Remodeling can be an investment in your quality of life. In some cases it can also be an investment in increasing the value of your home. For the most part, however it's about making something within your home better or more enjoyable for you.

Also realize that you will have to invest not only in quality fixtures and materials for your project but also in quality workmanship and professionalism that ensures that you will have a positive experience. The biggest reason people end up with unfinished projects or inferior finishes is because they often-times chose the contractor with the lowest price.

If you devour remodeling TV and have watched every episode of *Holmes on Homes*, realize that you are not watching the real reality of remodeling. Many of these type of shows have virtually unlimited budgets and donations from sponsors and tend to compress tasks that in reality take 3 days to accomplish down to a 30 second clip during the course of a show.

4. Ask Questions.

Know what is happening inside your home. Ask questions and expect informed answers. But don't hover over the contractor and his trades people. Many projects don't have much time set aside for

multiple client/contractor meetings and asking too many questions at the wrong time, can disrupt the flow of work. Most contractors do plan on at least 1 meeting a week to allow a client time to ask questions and gain feedback on the progress of the project.

During the week, make a list of your questions and bring them up at the meeting and if any questions don't get answered, then request that the contractor follow up with you in a timely manner. If you do have a time critical question, for example: Say you are concerned about some aspect of the plumbing, yet the drywall is due to be installed, then you can by all means, ask and expect a quick answer.

5. Enjoy The Transformation!

If you perform your due diligence and find the right person or company that you are comfortable with to remodel your kitchen, plus you have a budget for your project that is realistic, then you are well on your way towards having a rewarding experience that will result in a new kitchen that you will enjoy for years to come!

About The Author

Bio's are like resumes, just about everyone has one and few ever read them. If you want to have some insight into what makes me tick, read on!

I'll skip the early years other than to mention that I've always been drawn to the feel and aroma of wood. I remember been on holiday in the seaside village of Cornwall, England and seeing in the window of a toy shop, a real wooden tool chest full of wood working tools. Boy, did I ever want that chest of tools!

I started out working in the shop of a local builder here on Cape Cod at the young age of eleven. I can still smell the sweet tang of pine as well as the dust "cough" that I my first job was to sweep up everyday. Most times, I found myself working with Cam, the builder's brother who always had an eye half closed from the smoke off the ever present cigarette that dangled from his lips. Cam was a crackerjack carpenter who took the time to show me the in's and outs of working with wood. My ears still ring with his favorite curse..."Bitchhach" drawn out with his Rhode Island accent.

High school and after found me working for some pleasant and not so pleasant characters as I worked my way through the trades. As time passed, I made the leap a few times into working for myself, and yes, fell flat a couple of times.

The early 90's were a busy time as I had at one point, six carpenters working for me as we tackled several large whole house remodeling projects. I remember fondly many of the fellows whom I worked together to create something that everyday we could stand back and see tangible results of our efforts. Sometimes we bragged about our latest tool acquisitions and other times we competed to see who could complete projects in a timely manner.

Today, with the changes in the economy, I discovered that with smaller project sizes, it's an ideal business model to stay small and frugal with solid connections to help as needed.

When I'm not working to make my clients homes better, I can be found enjoying trips to the beach with my wife Tara and daughter Katiebeth. When time permits, I can occasionally work on writing via my blogs. I've also found much pleasure in working in my community having given time and effort to the Cape Cod Children's Museum, Christ The King Parish, Cotuit Center for the Arts and the Fal-mouth Christmas Parade.

All in all, I'm quite fortunate to be able to follow my multiple passions.

John Clark 2011

Certified Remodeler. National Association of The Remodeling Industry. (NARI)

Certified Lead Safe Renovator. Environmental Protection Agency. (EPA)

