

Frequently Asked Questions About Home Remodeling



Buckingham
Group 
DESIGN ■ REMODELING

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The purpose of this brochure is to share over 43 years of remodeling knowledge and experience with both existing and potential clients. It is our intent that the answers to these commonly asked questions will take some of the mystery away from the unknowns of the world of home remodeling. Its contents may convince you to move ahead with your project, to ask additional questions to clarify the scope of work being considered or abandon the remodeling idea and find a new home that will better fit your family's needs. Additional information on this subject can be found in our free resource e-book titled **Should you Remodel or Move.**



How much will my home remodeling project cost per square foot?

The foundation for this question lies in the way the cost of a new home is normally estimated by a potential purchaser. Capital expensive areas such as kitchens and bathrooms are combined with inexpensive areas such as hallways and bedrooms. A basic calculation is then used to get the average cost per square foot for the entire new home.

In remodeling, it is not that simple, as we are focusing on specific areas of the home, not averages over the entire home. We must take into consideration demolition costs, potential structural changes, HVAC modifications, electrical and plumbing changes or upgrades, as well as the logistics involved for controlling dust, protecting furniture, and undertaking the work within an occupied and landscaped home. Supplementing these issues, are selections that are representative of your individual tastes for floor coverings, appliances, plumbing fixtures and other items, all of which, can vary and ultimately factor into the final cost of your remodel.

Independent of these variables, after 43 years of experience, we have created an informative booklet with a range of estimated costs for common projects. To access this information, which is updated annually, download our Free Resource Brochure **The 2025 Tulsa Remodeling Cost Guide**. The information in this brochure provides general guidelines and price ranges for a variety of popular home remodeling projects. This guide is not to be misconstrued as a guarantee of the final cost of the projects described but only a generalization of the range of costs that might be incurred.



How do I start a home remodeling project?

The first step is to establish a vision and goal for your remodel. Once these have been brought into focus, set a budget and time frame. Then engage an experienced design build remodeling firm that will take your remodel from concept to completion with one source responsibility. Proper preparation in this stage of development creates the foundation for a smooth and successful remodel. For information on our systematic approach to home remodeling, visit the **Our Design Build Process Section** of our website or schedule a **Free Initial Consultation** with a member of our design team.



How do I choose the right contractor?

When considering a home remodeling project, it is important to work with a well-established, trustworthy professional team of remodeling experts. Make sure that you hire a firm that has knowledge and expertise relevant to the home remodeling business. Look for a design build company with longevity within the metropolitan Tulsa area that will handle your project from concept to completion. Additional insight and general guidelines on how to select a remodeling contractor can be found in our free brochure **How to Select a Remodeling Contractor**.

What is the difference between an estimate and a fixed price?

Many people are led to believe that an estimate represents the total cost of what a sketchy idea with limited drawings and specifications of their project will cost. Unfortunately, this is not the case. An estimate approximates what your remodel could potentially cost. Unfortunately, as the final design comes into focus the investment typically increases dramatically for all the items that were not included in the estimate or not priced to reflect your final choices. Examples of this dilemma could be in the choice of a bathroom lavatory faucet or a dishwasher for the kitchen where an allowance is included. Is it the \$175.00 lavatory faucet and \$250.00 dishwasher both of which have been designed to be in a land fill after a couple of years or one that will last for fifteen to twenty years? Further complications are grounded in the fact that an estimate is not considered a legally binding contract unless it is specifically stated as such.

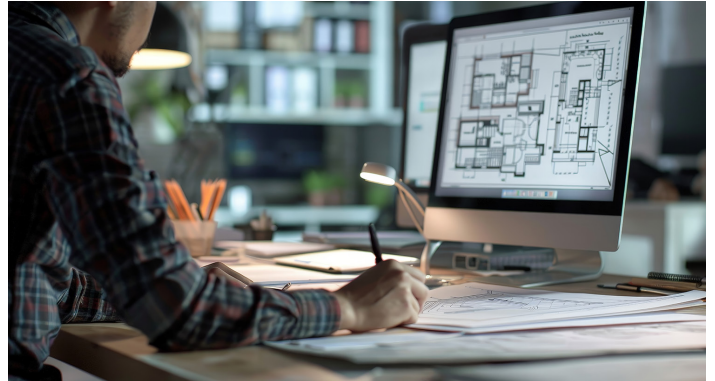


In direct contrast to an estimate is the fixed price contract that is used by The Buckingham Group. It contains a comprehensive written scope of work document with incomparable detail on every phase of your remodel. The payment schedule is directly tied to a fixed price for the specified work and product content that are progressively delivered in clearly defined increments during construction. It is a legally binding document when accepted and signed by both parties and provides the comfort of financial stability for all.

Supplementing the fixed price of your project, we will, at your request, offer enhancements for alternate selections or construction modifications that you want to consider. These changes, or enhancements, generally do not change the function of the space, but offer aesthetic improvements that require an additional investment on your behalf. A good example would be in a kitchen where an exotic stone countertop, at an additional price, replaces the granite top specified in the contract. This change in material will not modify your cooking skills or the countertops durability. Its only purpose, if added, would be based on its aesthetic appeal to you. The enhancement's description, coupled with the added investment required, will provide you with the financial information needed to make that decision.

How long is the design process?

The design process is dependent upon the complexity and size of the remodel as well as the backlog of designs and estimates already in progress in our design department. Once started, the design for a simple project can be done in one to two weeks whereas a total home remodel may take several months. For additional insight into our design process and the services that we offer, review our Services Gallery where you will find information on eight popular design build home remodeling projects.





How long will my remodeling project take?

Once you have your remodeling finances secured, and the design process started, your next thought will likely be, "how long" will the transformation of your vision into the fabulous home that you have dreamed about take. Project completion and the time to get there is the final step of this process that needs to be carefully planned. This ensures your dreams do not become the nightmares that periodically appear in your local newspaper.

To keep the completion date line in focus we use the **Buildertrend Construction Management Software** to develop and project the length of time, as well as identify the steps and trades that will be involved in your remodel. We represent this as an educated approximation, but not a guarantee, of the time for completion. However, even with the most sophisticated project management software, surprise variables can pop up and impact the finish date. Although we order long delivery items within 48 hours of contract signing, unanticipated delays can ripple through the calendar and end up extending the schedule. Unforeseen conditions that are hidden behind walls and or floors may also impact the completion date. Anticipating these possible roadblocks in advance will help you maintain your sanity and expectations. The following general guidelines for four popular projects are designed to help you with the planning process.



How do I know Whether or not I am Getting Quality Work at a Fair Price?

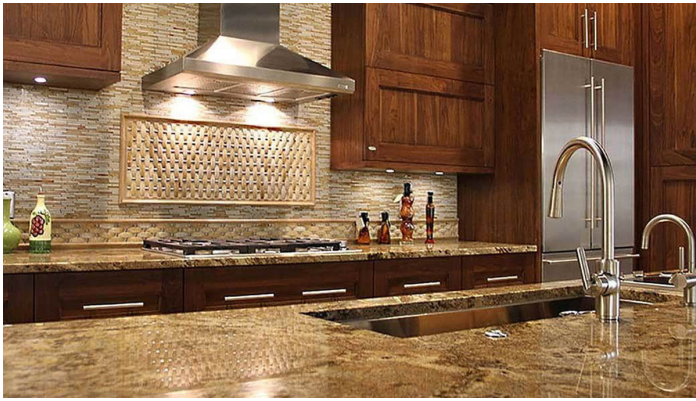
Everyone loves a low price. As a result, many homeowners get into trouble when they automatically select the remodeler that provides them the lowest price for a combination of design and construction work.

Before you jump on that band wagon, the prudent thing to do, is to thoroughly investigate the companies under consideration. Reputation, years in business and testimonials are a starting point. Review examples of their scope of work documents and drawings that you will receive. Evaluate their warranty programs. Look at their portfolios for a sense of the quality and craftsmanship that they provide. If possible, visit one of their completed projects for a hands-on idea of their work or in the alternate look at their Before & After Portfolio for examples of their creativity.

At the end of the day, you need to be comfortable with your choice as there is more to the decision than just the price, which is a one-time occurrence and not the total cost of the remodel. The real cost of the project will be the cumulative total of the initial price plus the cost of fixing what was not done right to start with. That is why at The Buckingham Group we do things right, warrant our work and provide you with the lowest cost of ownership.



Remodeling a Kitchen



Duration

Total remodeling of a kitchen will take an estimated eight to sixteen weeks after completion of design work and the actual start of the remodel. The length of time is dependent upon the complexity of the remodel and the availability of needed products to complete the kitchen.

What is involved in a kitchen remodel?

Remodeling of a kitchen entails far more than meets the eye. The kitchen is not only the heart of the home, but it is also the home's workhorse. It is generally served by three different utilities and is constructed with an abundance of different materials and specialty components that cumulatively allow it to function. Overall, your remodel will involve demolition, HVAC modifications, electrical changes and potential relocation of walls and water lines. We develop a floor plan for your kitchen using a combination of the in-depth knowledge of an experienced cook, job site documentation of the existing kitchen details and the information gathered through our proprietary kitchen questionnaire. This cumulative input focuses our team on your unique goals and functional requirements. While the floor plan is being developed, your time and or that of a decorator should be invested in making selections of countertops, appliances, plumbing fixtures, backsplashes, paint or stain colors, flooring and finishing accessories such as cabinet pulls and specialty lighting.

The simple facts are that the remodel of a kitchen is one of the most disruptive remodels that you can experience. To plan for your project, download our informative brochure on **How to Prepare for your Kitchen Remodel**.

Potential Challenges

The major challenges encountered are delays in appliance deliveries, hidden structural deficiencies on previously remodeled areas of the home, products that may arrive damaged due to delivery issues, and the procurement of specialty items that have only one source of supply.



Remodeling a Bathroom



Duration

Remodeling a bathroom will take an estimated three to sixteen weeks depending upon whether it is the remodel of a compact powder room, guest bathroom or the total remodel of the homeowner's bathroom/bedroom suite with features that are equivalent to those found in a high-end spa..

What is involved in a bathroom remodel?

Remodel of a bathroom, usually entails complete demolition, new and upgraded plumbing fixtures, electrical changes, new cabinets and countertops, tile work and depending on the scale, installation of heated floors, tub to shower conversions and the possible relocation of walls.

Potential Challenges

The most common challenges are caused by water damage, resulting in rotted flooring and walls and or mold issues. Mold issues are addressed using certified mold remediation experts. Structural issues are addressed by our carpenters. Older homes with galvanized water lines present their own unique set of problems, as these lines are often badly corroded and need to be totally replaced with either flexible PEX tubing or a combination of rigid and flexible copper.

Room Additions



Duration

Room additions take many forms, ranging from first level buildouts, second level additions and attic space conversions. The amount of time to complete a room addition is dependent on zoning issues, homeowner association requirements, accessibility to its location, the complexity of its features and the end use of the remodeled space. As a result, duration of a room addition can range from an estimated three to eight months.

What is involved in a room addition?

Planning for a room addition can involve structural engineering, detailed architectural plans and multiple approvals of regulatory authorities. Thoughtful design must be given to the architectural tie in between the exterior of the new and existing structures as well as the traffic pattern in the interior. Once approvals have been obtained construction begins with lot grading, footings, framing, roofing, masonry, electrical, plumbing and HVAC installations, followed by, insulation, sheetrock, interior trim and outfitting the space with finishing touches and or equipment needed to accomplish your goal.

Potential Challenges

The most common challenges encountered are delays in regulatory approval, particularly in historic preservation districts, limited access to the job site, soil problems and depending upon the season, time delays due to uncontrollable weather conditions.

Outdoor Living Spaces

Duration

The definition of an outdoor living space covers as broad a spectrum as one can imagine. They can range from the simplicity of a barbecue or smoker installation at the rear or side of the house to the complexity of a complete outdoor living space. Accordingly, the time frame to design and construct an outdoor living space can range from one week to six to eight months depending upon its construction, its features and the activities that you would like it to serve.

What is involved in construction of an Outdoor Living Space?

Planning for an outdoor living space can involve landscaping, structural engineering, detailed architectural plans, how water flow on the property will be affected by its construction and its effect on neighboring properties as well as multiple approvals by regulatory authorities. If an in-ground swimming pool is part of the plan, detailed drawings, and a separate building permit are required. Construction of an outdoor room begins with, grading, excavation, footings, concrete work, framing, roofing, masonry, electrical, plumbing and exhaust system installations. To provide an all-season structure, features might include motorized screens, and infrared heaters. If the space is totally enclosed, construction may involve installation of a separate HVAC system, insulation, sheetrock, stainless steel cabinets, stone countertops, interior trim and durable flooring finishes such as tile and or stamped concrete.



Potential Challenges

The most common challenges encountered are delays in regulatory approval, particularly in historic preservation districts, limited access to the job site, the relocation of noisy HVAC compressors, and depending upon the season, time delays due to uncontrollable weather conditions.



What permits do I need for my remodel?

Permits depend on local codes, project scope and the version of the International Building Code that is being enforced by your community. Framing, plumbing, HVAC and electrical work typically require permits independent of location. Structural permits, including footing and framing are required where structural modifications are being made to the existing building or for a room addition that is an integral part of the remodel.

Do you Use Employees or Subcontractors on your Remodels?



Our construction team consists of a combination of Buckingham Group employees and vetted specialty trade licensed contractors with whom we have long-term working relationships. All members of this team are as invested as we are in ensuring that your project is completed 100% in compliance with building code requirements. They are also expected to meet the exacting quality standards that we have established over our 43-year history. Our projects are supervised by a working project leader who will be your main contact during construction. He will be at your remodel during all critical construction stages of the project.

Do you Carry Workers Compensation and Liability Insurance?

Both The Buckingham Group and our subcontractors carry workers comp and liability insurance for your protection. Without these policies in place, you as the homeowner, are potentially exposing yourself to considerable financial liability.

If a worker is hurt while working on your job, workers comp insurance pays for the expenses associated with the injuries and offers compensation for lost wages at no additional cost to you.

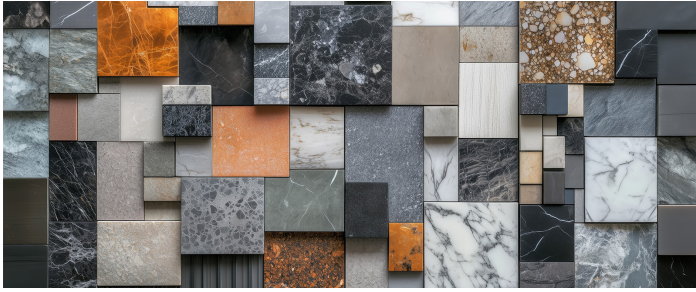
Although neither The Buckingham Group, nor its subcontractors, will intentionally damage your home, accidents can happen. Liability insurance covers damage caused to your home by the acts of either us or our sub-contractors. For your peace of mind and to relieve you of concerns for financial responsibility beyond your homeowner's policy, we will provide certificates of insurance for both workers comp and liability policies prior to the start of your remodel.

Can I live in my home during the remodel?

In most remodels, living in your home, although an inconvenience during the construction process, is certainly possible. The circumstances under which you would want to move out are, during a total home remodel where construction is being undertaken in every room, when there is a need for total remediation of a mold problem or for dealing with a lead removal issue. If you are just remodeling your kitchen or a bathroom you can, with proper planning, stay in your home. The key to this is proper scheduling which in our case is exercised through use of the **Buildertrend Project Management** system. With this system in place, we have successfully brought most of our remodeling projects to completion without the Owner's having to leave their home. Since the remodel of a kitchen is the most disruptive type of a remodel, we authored an informative and easily downloaded brochure titled **How to Prepare for a Kitchen Remodel**.



Who selects the products and finishes for my remodel?



The final decision on project content and finishes should reflect your vision and tastes. For those clients who have the capability of making these decisions, without assistance, or through an interior decorator with whom they have a relationship, we provide our Preferred Vendor Handbook. It is our opinion that this unique, user-friendly booklet, contains a list of the best vendors for each of the products or services that could potentially be used in your remodel. The companies listed in the booklet, are sources that we feel offer an outstanding combination of price, service, and technical competence. Our relationship with these vendors ranges from a minimum of five years to as long as 43 years.



Should you need assistance with your selections, we can refer you to an interior decorator that we have successfully worked with for many years. Your relationship with the decorator will be financially independent from that of The Buckingham Group.



What are the stages in development of a remodeling proposal?

We use a systemized approach to proposal development that has been carefully refined over our 43 years in business. We start with our design contract which outlines our fee structure for the development of a complete proposal for your remodel. The collection of documents that ultimately evolve from signing of a design contract includes comprehensive drawings, specifications, and a fixed price contract.

After signing of the design contract, we enter the discovery phase. During this phase we measure and photograph the area of the home being affected by the remodel. Simultaneously, we explore your ideas using our project specific questionnaires. This cumulative gathering of information becomes the foundation from which we develop your proposed plans.

Modifications to the existing floor plans are formulated by the vision and goals that you provide us. Once the proposed floor plan is completed, it is presented to you for review. For the sake of efficiency, we bring job specific subcontractors to this meeting to view the job site and to provide them with copies of drawings that represent their responsibilities on the project. If the presented plans meet both your vision and the goals you have for your remodel, we proceed into the estimating and specification writing stage. On the other hand, if we need to make changes, they are fine honed to meet your expectations.

During the development phases your responsibility, or that of your decorator, will be to select products, appliances, paints and accessories that will ultimately define the final scope of work for completion of your remodel. Emerging from this assembly of facts and figures you will receive a comprehensive set of specifications, a fixed price contract and a detailed set of drawings which cumulatively will provide you with a focused picture of your financial obligations and the scope of work for the entire project.

How do you handle construction debris and dust during the remodel?

We are proactive about protecting the exterior surfaces and the interior contents of your home from dust and damage from construction debris.



Prior to delivery of the project dumpster, we install a combination of polyethylene and Masonite barrier on the surface of the driveway. The purpose of this system is to protect your driveway against staining or damage from the impact of the unit as it is lowered into place.

On the interior, our staff covers your return air registers with an air filter to keep dust from circulating within the HVAC system. We simultaneously set up polyethylene barriers to minimize the prospect of construction dust escaping from the construction site into adjoining rooms. Prior to the start of construction, we cover selected furnishings with polyethylene protective barriers. Where practical, and at no additional cost to you, we install an air scrubbing system that will filter the air within the construction zone. We exhaust the air to the outside through an available window or door, thereby creating a negative pressure within the construction area. This arrangement is the most effective way to minimize dust from filtering into areas outside of the construction zone. At the end of each day, we place construction debris in the job site dumpster and leave the workspace broom clean.



Independent of how hard we try, some dust will filter into the house outside of the construction zone. We remediate this problem by doing a thorough cleaning of all spaces affected prior to turning them over to you for your personal use.

How do you schedule your remodels?

We schedule our remodels using the **Buildertrend Construction Management** system which is an all-in-one project management software. This allows the Buckingham Group to control most of your project from a single platform.

Its capabilities include planning, customer management, subcontractor scheduling, communication, document storage and financial tracking. By centralizing this information, it provides an insurance policy that all parties involved in the project have access to the latest updates in real-time. As a result, the construction process is streamlined, tasks are easily assigned to team members and subcontractors, allowing their progress to be measured against deadlines. The client portal is specifically constructed to keep you informed. It provides a direct link through which you can address concerns or get answers on your project 24 hours a day from anywhere in the world that has internet access.



How do you handle changes to the plans and specifications after the start of the remodel?

All changes to the original plans, whether a credit, a physical change with no financial implications, or an increase in the investment needed are documented and presented through our change order system. They are delivered to you electronically through the Builder Trend Construction Management System. Your electronic signature is used to accept or reject their contents. A running total of your financial obligations are kept in this program keeping you totally informed of your remaining balance. It is our objective to ensure that there are no financial surprises when your progress or final invoice becomes due.

Do you guarantee your work?

We are so confident in the quality of our work that we offer a five-year carpentry workmanship warranty. We don't wait for you to call us. We call you every six months during the Workmanship Warranty program and twice a year for our Lifetime Warranty program. Details of our warranty program can be found in the **Warranty Program** section of our website.



For more answers and inspiration, it's bgtulsa.com.