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WHY I WROTE THIS

I'm glad you downloaded this before starting your project if only to prevent some of the many pitfalls that careful planning can avoid. Now don't get me wrong here. Things WILL go wrong. It is just an inherent part of a complex undertaking with so many moving parts. But far fewer things will go wrong if you are as thorough with up-front planning as you can be.

There are homeowners who prefer to tackle their project themselves. And there are homeowners who, just beginning to think about a renovation, realize it is a lot more involved than it seems at first glance. Either way, this guide is for you.



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PLANNING AND PREPARATION IS THE KEY TO A SUCCESSFUL RENOVATION

JUST A FEW THINGS I WISH I HAD KNOWN BEFORE I STARTED IN THIS BUSINESS...

A renovation project is very exciting ...or at least it can be. Or it can be disheartening if you don't plan properly. Preparation makes the difference.

Read the heading again at the top of the page because that is really what you need to remember. If you were ever a Girl Guide or a Boy Scout, you've already learned the most important thing you need to know. Do you remember their motto? Be Prepared!

If you run out and line up a contractor from the start, then you've already put the cart before the horse. They will need things to be ready for their crew in the order they need to install them. That is not necessarily the order you should be making your selections in.

Decision fatigue can set in fast leaving a DIY'er overwhelmed and frustrated. Good decisions are never made in the throws of exhaustion and frustration. Bad decisions are.



Having a plan is the key to avoiding overwhelm and getting the outcome you've been dreaming of.

The most expensive mistakes happen when you make major selections too early in the game... before you have a big picture vision and a plan to convey your design decisions to your contractor. The key is to know which decisions need to be made first, which decisions need to be made later.

When we plan a renovation project or a furnishing and decorating project, we work with you to create a complete colour and finishes plan. Why? This provides the information needed before the contractor installs the big ticket investment selections. Materials and colours of countertop, flooring, backsplash, cabinet hardware and any other items need to be selected collectively to make sure they will each work with the others to achieve your overall aesthetic.

Each decision you make for your renovation influences the next, so if you start off with one poor selection, everything that follows will build on those first selections cascading your project in an unfortunate direction.

This is how easy it is to go from planning your dream home to building something that looks nothing like your vision. How do you avoid this mistake?

Read on...



Follow these steps for a successful renovation

A look ahead at the steps

- 1. Identify your home's architectural style
- 2. Determine your personal style
- 3. Make a detailed plan: some selections need to be made BEFORE others
- 4. Make a detailed plan: some selections need to be made AFTER others
- 5. Compare your selections as you go (we use mood boards)
- 6. Stick to the Plan
- 7. Document everything for your prospective contractor
- 8. Get quotes from several contractors
- 9. Hire a good fit
- 10. Enjoy!



Follow these steps for a successful renovation

CONSIDER THE STYLE OF YOUR HOME

Many older homes have a specific design or architectural style that falls into one of the broad categories of:

- Modern
- Transitional
- Traditional

It is important to identify the style of your home before you plan your renovation. Designers work with the style of your home in order to obtain a cohesive result. Although styles can be mixed, it takes a trained eye to pull it off. If you are unsure, a good choice is transitional, a blend of detailed modern and simplified traditional elements.

DECIDE WHAT YOUR VISION IS

The envelope is the installed and 'glued-down' finishes such as millwork, flooring, cabinets, etc. The contents of the envelope include furnishings, art, rugs etc.

It is best to keep selections for the envelope versatile and timeless. Ideally, you want your home to be a backdrop for evolving styles. This allows for easy decorating updates as new trends come, without having to make costly renovations to keep your home looking current.

This is also an opportunity for you to explore your personal style in creating your vision for your home. To fully explore your style, it helps to look at inspiration images and get clear on what you like and don't like. Pinterest boards can be helpful for saving inspirational images.

MAKE A DETAILED PLAN: Some selections need to be made BEFORE others

Now you're ready to select the materials, finishes and colours for your home.

Decide what will be the main feature... the star of the show. It could be the cabinetry, and include other large surface selections such as countertop, cabinets, and floors. For example, in a kitchen the main feature is typically the cabinetry or the countertop. All subsequent selections will need to support that feature. (A design checklist follows to help you with this.)



Follow these steps for a successful renovation



MAKE A DETAILED PLAN: Some selections need to be made AFTER others

Once you select your keystone items, everything else should be selected in support of them.

Select supporting items such as backsplash, grout colour, edge trim, paint, etc. Then, you can pick out the lighting, plumbing fixtures, and hardware (see the design checklist).

Contrary to popular opinion, paint colour is the LAST thing to be selected. There are 3,500 paint colours in the leading manufacturer's collection. (If you have difficulty narrowing it down to the one that's right for you, book a colour consultation with us. We can help with that!)



SELECTIONS COMPARISONS and MOODBOARDS

One of the key takeaways from years of experience is that everything needs to be considered collectively to create a cohesive result with flow from one space to another.

Designers achieve cohesive results by careful comparison of selections and considering their undertones. Understanding how to select the right materials and colours is the keystone. Knowing how to read their undertones and qualities is the secret sauce. We put everything together on what's called a moodboard - either virtual or physical - to ensure each new selection supports the overall style and colour palette. We always use physical samples to ensure colour accuracy, so collect your samples. You don't need to do this formally, but you do need to collect all of your selections together to compare them to a see if they all work together.



STICK TO THE PLAN

The best advice I can give you is this...

Various trades, contractors, and well-meaning neighbors, friends and family - all of whom have different ideas of what makes good design - will want to offer advice. Don't allow yourself to be derailed by conflicting opinions. They don't have your overall vision in mind. Only you do.

The more opinions you gather, the more they will confuse you and move you away from the cohesive outcome you want.

Follow these steps for a successful renovation

DOCUMENT EVERYTHING BEFORE DAY ONE WITH YOUR CONTRACTOR

You may need to consult with trades and contractors prior to finalizing your plans but before they can quote for the job, they will need to know the details of the design. They can't formally quote for the work until they fully understand what they are quoting on. Be sure and include any demolition notes for your contractor to provide a quote.

The more organized you are the better. If you have everything selected and specs organized, ready for a seamless install, it will help the job run smoother.

OBTAIN SEVERAL QUOTES

If you don't already have a contractor, interview several candidates before deciding. This is another reason to have all your planning work done: they can all quote on the same thing.

Ask about how they manage timelines, safety, and cleanliness on the jobsite at end of each day. Check their reputation, etc.

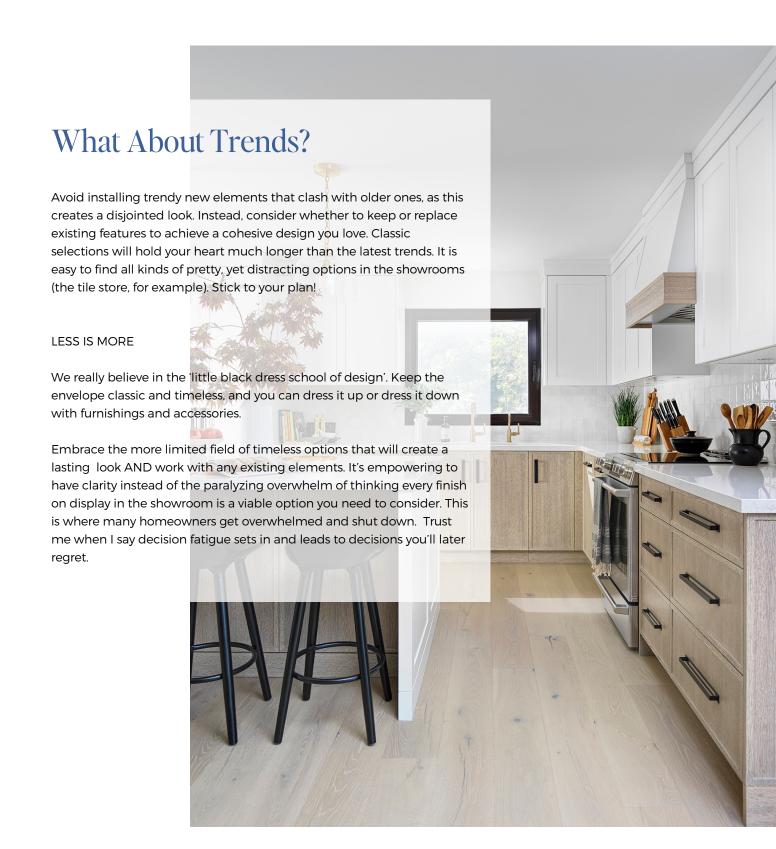
REMEMBER YOU ARE HIRING A PERSON AND HIS TEAM

Selecting a contractor is like match-making. You will be interacting with this person over a period of months, so reliable communication, clarity, and a good working relationship are essential for addressing any problems and misunderstandings that may come up ... and they will come up!

ENJOY!

Renovating can be a daunting task, but it can also be exciting and fun. If you plan thoroughly up front, you can look forward to a much smoother process.

What else to consider?



HOW WE CAN HELP

If you find this is all too much, or if you would like some assistance with specific issues, we can help. Our approach can save you time and money (and some grief), and even make the process fun.

Once we get to know your needs, we can provide a curated selection of materials, finishes and fixtures chosen for your home. These are selected from our vetted list of vendors and within established pricing brackets.



We select:

- Flooring
- Kitchen and bathroom countertops (profile and curb details, etc.)
- · Cabinetry and hardware for kitchen and bath
- Plumbing fixtures
- Accent tiles for backsplash and bathrooms (including grout)
- Decorative lighting
- Paint colour palette
- Product samples and flat lay images
- Kitchen and bathroom elevations
- Material layout instructions
- Space planning and furniture layouts
- · Detailed specification and installation sheets for products
- Client presentations of selections
- Additional design or sourcing services for clients requiring upgrades
- · Furnishing and styling of show homes or apartments
- Furnishing, décor, window treatments for clients

We're Here If you Need Help

WE CAN SELECT FINISHES



KITCHENS

- Space planning and layout
- Cabinet selection: profile, colour, species/material
- Countertop: material, finish
- Backsplash: tile, layout, and grout
- Plumbing fixtures: faucets, sinks
- Cabinet hardware: handles, knobs, pulls
- Flooring
- Decorative lighting: pendants, chandeliers, sconces etc.
- · Paint colour palette

BATHROOMS

- Vanity design/selection
- Tile selection: layout and grout and edge finish
- Hardware: style, finish, size, placement
- Plumbing fixtures: vanity faucets, tub filler, shower fixtures, rough-ins, etc.
- Shower enclosure
- Flooring
- Decorative lighting: sconces, pendants
- Mirrors/medicine cabinets
- · Paint colour palette

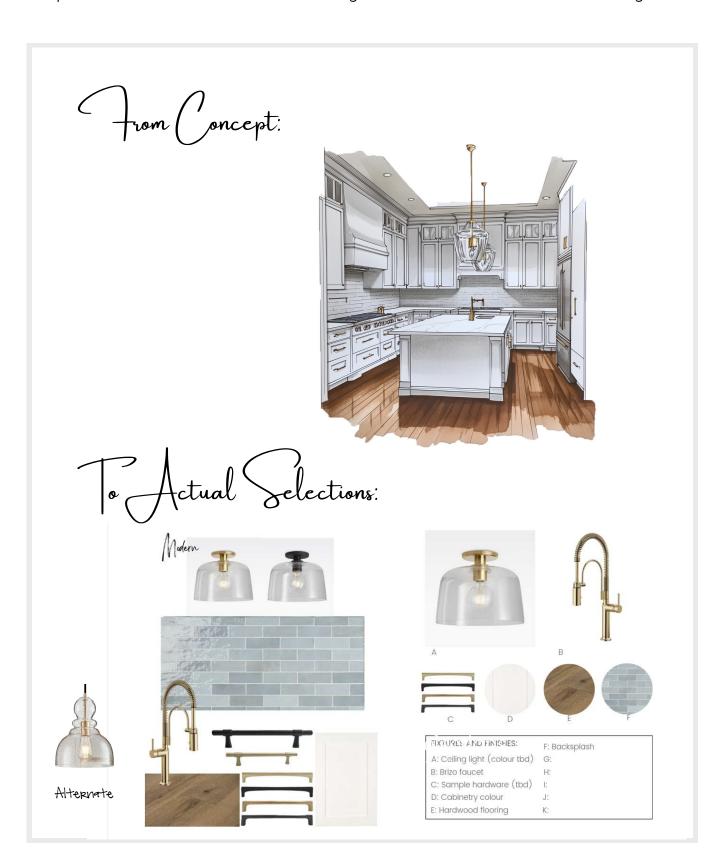
LAUNDRY ROOMS

- Cabinets
- Countertops
- · Backsplash tile and grout
- Hardware
- Flooring
- · Paint colour palette



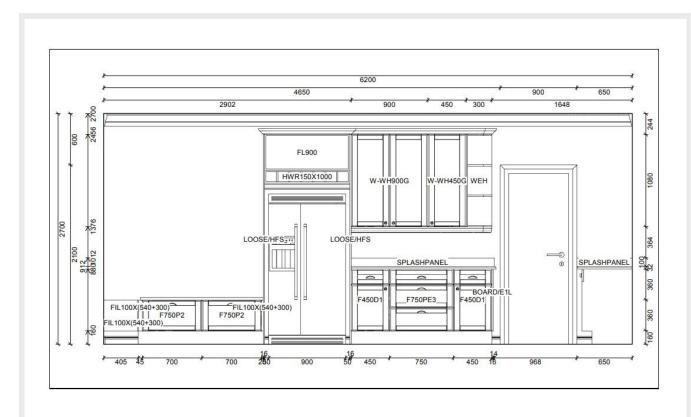
WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM US

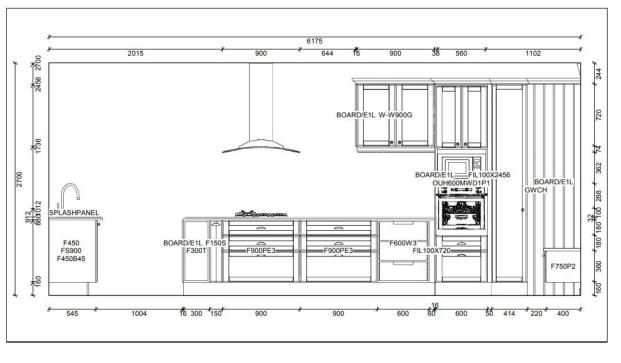
We provide visual aids to communicate design details and facilitate decision making



WE ALSO PROVIDE

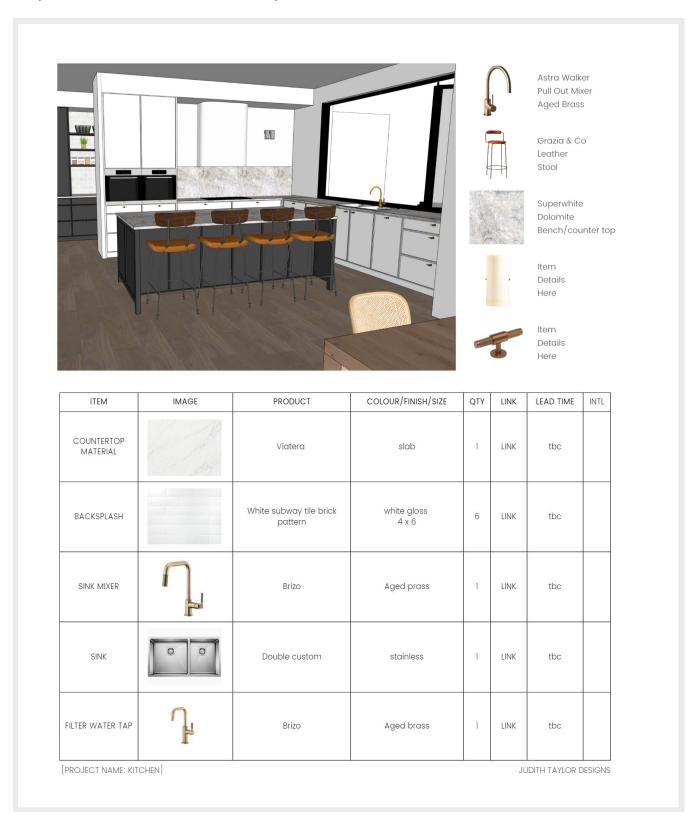
Detailed drawings





AND

Easy to follow instruction sheets for your contractor



... SOME EXAMPLES OF OUR RECENT WORK











TIME TO GET STARTED?

You're ready to take the first step. We're ready to help, if you need.





You're ready to take the first step. We're ready to help, if you need.



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For Kitchen Renovations

5	uy	Caces
0		Flooring - hardwood/engineered: species/stain/ width/length/orientation/pattern - (grout if tile is used) Countertops - material, pattern and finish (polished/honed/leathered), edge profile, cutting pattern Backsplash (and grout), placement, orientation edge details (Schluter/bullnose etc.) Wall finish (paint: colour/sheen/product; wallpaper)
Aff.	ppli	iances
/ /		Refrigerator: (French door/Side-by-side; Slide-in/Integrated/Panel ready/Fridge drawers etc.) Range: Gas/electric/induction/integrated (cooktop/wall oven(s)) Dishwasher: (panel ready), dishwasher drawer Ventilation hood: Millwork, housing, other Microwave: drawer, niche, nook Beverage Fridge
	afi	nets
		Layout Features - focal wall/ glass display/appliance garage/pantry/coffee station/scullery Cabinet style door style/species/colour/profile(frameless - face frame), etc. Hardware style, finish, sizes
	lecti	rical
		Ambient lighting - recessed ceiling lights Decorative pendants Wall-mounted lighting - sconces Undercabinet lighting - placement, specifications Switch placement and switch plates Outlet placement and outlet style Charging outlets Small appliance outlets

RENOVATION CHECKLIST For Kitchen Renovations

Plu	nling
	Sink - main prep sink - single/large single/ double same size/double small and large/galley sink system
	Prep sink and faucet (include rough-ins)
	Bar sink and faucet (include rough-ins)
	Water to fridge
	water to dishwasher
	Pot filler
	Instant hot water
	Garburator
	Faucet - main - single handle/double/bridge/goose-neck/pull-down spray/smart/hot/sparkling water -
	finish - style
Acce	essovies
	Recycle centre
	Corner organization - pull out, lazy susan
	Cutlery tray (s)
	Spice drawer
	Condiment pull-out
	Pull-out pantry
	Under sink pull-out
	Pots and pans organization
	Pot lids dividers
	Sheet pans and trays dividers
	Sink accessories

Bathroom Kenovations

Sur	Laces
	Flooring - hardwood/engineered: species/stain/ width/length/orientation/pattern - (grout if tile is used Countertops - material, pattern and finish (polished/honed/leathered), edge profile, cutting pattern Backsplash (and grout), placement, orientation edge details (Schluter/bullnose etc.) Wall finish (paint: colour/sheen/product: wallpaper) Shower wall Finish (tile or slab) Niche(s) location, size, shelf, material
App	liances
	Towel warmer Exhaust fan Radiant floor heating 'Smart' features: toilet, shower Speakers
Oak	inets
	Vanity Linen tower Organization - blow dryer/ curling iron holder Cabinet style door style/species/colour/profile(frameless - face frame), etc. Hardware style finish, sizes
$\int e\bar{c}$	trical
	Ambient overhead lighting - recessed ceiling lights Decorative pendants Wall-mounted lighting - sconces Kickplate/under vanity night lighting Switch placement and switch plates
	Outlet placement and outlet style Charging outlets Ventilation fan control Radiant floor heating control

Bathroom Renovations (cont.)

	un	bing
, (Sink - single or double
		Faucet - main - single handle or dual controls (include rough-ins)
		Tub filler
		Shower - rainhead
		Shower - hand held
	П	Divertor
		Valves
		Drain
1	_ /	
70	xti	ives
•		Toilet
		Tub
		Bidet
		Urinal
	\Box	
	1	
N	livi	~ovs
/		Mirror
		Medicine cabinet
		Magnifying mirror
Λ		
/ c	ces	sovies
•		Towel bar(s)
		Guest towel ring (s)
		TP holder
		Robe hook(s)

General Home Renovations

\bigvee	700	ving
	100	
•	(Engineered/LVP/hardwood
		Transitions
7	in	ish Carpentry
		wan tiiii /
		Baseboard
		Shoe Molding
		Door casing
		Window casing
		Sills
		Plinth base
		Crown Molding
		Door - profile, style and hardware
		Railings
¥	ive	blace Gas/electric/wood burning
		Surround
		Surround
		Hoarth
		Hearth
		Hearth Mantle
Ac	Ces	
Ac	Ces	
Ac		Mantle
Ac	ces	Mantle Sovies Floor outlets
Ac	 - - - - -	Mantle Sovies Floor outlets
Ac		Mantle Sovies Floor outlets