



STARTING A RENOVATION PROJECT ON YOUR OWN:

Take 5 (Episode 2) SET GOALS: FIND OUT WHAT YOU REALLY WANT TO DO!

Design is a constant series of compromises that require accurate, truthful, and appropriate information to discern what is best for your situation. Whether you are designing for yourself or working with a designer, architect, or builder, the following exercise is vital to bring awesome value to your investment. It will help you develop information to determine what is most important to your project. It is a process that takes time, thought, and scrutiny but produces high returns.

Renovation typically involves a large investment of money and time. Pre-planning is the only way to make sure your dollars are spent wisely. These suggestions are the start to a focused planning process that ensures every penny of spending is directed toward the important issues of your project and ultimately surpasses your expectations. The work input here will help you weigh and make easier design decisions that keep you focused on the target. Develop the following lists yourself and then test and share them with others so that you can get practical, and beneficial, feedback to your renovation direction. Couples, families, and business partners can make separate lists without worry about conflicting ideas or thoughts as these conflicts make for great design outcomes. Feel free to involve as many users of the project as you think necessary.

The following exercises lay clear ground work for evaluating design options. Remember, if you are aware of WHY you like or need something, you can make better choices that result in greater value.

1. CREATE A LOVE & HATE LIST

*What do you **love and hate** about your existing home, space, or work environment?*

Love and hate are extreme opposite feelings that highlight the main motivations for changing or improving space. Your planning should enhance the things you love and minimize, or eliminate, the things you hate in your environment. This is accomplished by using all your senses and thinking through the way you use your space now. Your body is equipped with an awesome system to collect the stimuli around you and your brain allows you to interpret this information in a very personal way. Recognize and trust yourself and assess what you have and how it works, or doesn't.

As humans, we tend to adapt to our surroundings and accept poor function, inconvenient patterns and confused aesthetics. In this exercise we encourage you to look around and discern the reality of your space. What is it about your kitchen that really makes you crazy? What does your office lack to make your work more productive and useful? Why do I like to spend time in my living room? What creates conflict? What brings joy?

EXAMPLE: THINGS I LOVE

The natural light filters on the floor

The views to the trees

The high ceilings make me feel refreshed

THINGS I HATE

Furniture is hard to arrange.

Spaces are always cold

Space is inefficient to use

2. CREATE A LIST OF YOUR NEEDS & SPACE REQUIREMENTS.

Determine the inherent size and spatial qualities that are required for you to function in the proposed renovation. Be specific, measure and record sizes of equipment, furniture, and space that you think are necessary to fulfill your needs. Is there a particular workflow, privacy, or other quality that the space(s) require? Does one space need to be close to another or share a common element?

EXAMPLE: *A place for my antique glass collection.*
Acoustical privacy in my study space
A place to fit my (6' x 4') treadmill.
A place for the family to watch movies together
A Kitchen where the family can cook together
A fully accessible bathroom with a roll-in shower for my mother
A 10' x 10' place to practice my drums
I need a 4 x 5 walk in pantry
I need 10' ceilings in my 12' x 12' exercise area.

3. CREATE A WISH LIST & COLLECT INSPIRATION

Boldly list the aspirations and ideas you wish to achieve and don't be concerned about costs right now. The point of making this list is to determine WHY the items and ideas interest you. Use images and photos of other spaces, furniture and styles to determine the inherent qualities of the things that attract and inspire you. This will help gain understanding of your own sense of design and play a large role in the design you are implementing at little or no additional cost. You may, for instance, study a space that you like and find that you really only like the way the light filters through the window or the color of the sofa. This will go a long way to providing a fulfilling design that you love without increasing your budget.

EXAMPLE:
I wish to hear the rain on the roof when sitting on the porch
I wish to have a space that is flexible for big parties but intimate for my spouse and I
I wish to have an elegant driveway and entry hall
I wish to have lots of views in every room.

4. SAVE, UPDATE AND REVIEW YOUR LISTS REGULARLY

Organize all the information and inspiration and review regularly as you move forward in your design process. You can always add or subtract from the lists as you better describe and evaluate your intentions. Consider this cache of information as a living document that gets better in describing what you really want.

5. SEEK INPUT FROM SOMEONE YOU TRUST

It's really hard to get true information these days without hype and special interest propaganda. Find a person, or team of people, to discuss and get feedback from. A person or team you can trust like a friend, family member, builder, architect, designer, etc. We emphasize the word TRUST because everyone has an opinion or bias these days but few really have experience.