

bathroom

ultimate planning guide

CHOOSE THE PERFECT
BATH PRODUCTS



**STYLE
& FUNCTION**
DESIGN A BATH
THAT HAS IT ALL

EXPERT ADVICE
ON BUDGET,
PLANNING, AND
REMODELING

Need help with
your project?
Find out how
pros can help.

p. 9

bathroom

ultimate planning guide



Whether you're remodeling an existing bath or planning a new home, we've compiled a handy guide to take you through the bath planning process.

The following pages will help you assess your current space and your everyday needs, decide what work you can do yourself and what you may need to hire out, and select the fixtures and materials that will make your bathroom an ideal retreat. Take some time to bring your dream bath into focus—and then let the dreaming, planning, and shopping begin!

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DREAMING ABOUT A NEW BATH

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DREAMING ABOUT A NEW BATH

BATH WISH LIST

Before beginning construction work, take time to assess your needs, devise an efficient layout, and determine a budget.



DETERMINE YOUR NEEDS

What do you love about your current bath?

What would you most like to change?

Describe your dream bath:

What type of feeling would you like your new bathroom space to have?

What colors do you like?

Will more than one person be using the bathroom at the same time? How often?

What bathroom activities are better done in private?

What bathroom activities can be done in a shared space?

Will this bathroom be used by visitors? How often?

Will visitors be children, adults, or both?

Do any users have physical limitations?

Do you prefer separate showering and bathing areas?

Would you like a tub that accommodates more than one person?

Would you like a shower that accommodates more than one person?

Do you prefer the water closet and/or bidet be separate from the other fixtures, placed in its own compartment?

DREAMING ABOUT A NEW BATH

BATH WISH LIST

Determine what activities you'll do in your bathroom and where you will want these activities to take place. Knowing how you'll use your bathroom will help you plan an efficient layout.

BATH ACTIVITIES

Grooming

	Yes	No	Where? (ie: vanity, tub, shower)
Washing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Shaving	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Brushing teeth/flossing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Trimming/painting nails	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Applying cosmetics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Drying/styling hair	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Skin care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
First aid	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Applying lotion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Medicines/vitamins	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____

Showering & Bathing

	Yes	No	Where? (ie: shower, tub, sink)
Washing body	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Washing hair	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Soaking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Bathing pets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Assisting an adult with bathing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____

Other Bath Activities

	Yes	No	Where?
Personal pampering	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Undressing/hamper	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Dressing: underwear/sleep clothes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Dressing: "street" clothes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Drinking beverages	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Eating snacks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Exercise without equipment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Exercise using equipment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Laundry: air dry	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Laundry: hand-wash	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Laundry: machine wash	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Laundry: sort/fold	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Listening to music	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Massage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Meditation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Polishing shoes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Reading	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Supervising children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Talking on telephone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Tanning/Sunning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Watching television	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Display collections	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Growing Plants	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Other:	_____		

STORAGE & SPACE PLANNING

Storage by Item Type

	Yes	No
Makeup	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shaving supplies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair grooming equipment/supplies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hand/foot grooming equipment/supplies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Personal hygiene items	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Medicine/first aid	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bathroom paper products	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bath towels and washcloths	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Household bedroom linens	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Exercise equipment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pet grooming/bath supplies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cleaning supplies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shoe polishing supplies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other:	_____	

Extra Amenities

	Yes	No
Blow dryer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Curling iron	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Electric toothbrush	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Electric razor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fireplace	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Radio/music player	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Scale	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Television/DVD player	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Towel warmer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Coffee machine	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mini fridge	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Washer/dryer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other:	_____	

BATH WISH LIST

Now that you have a vision for your new bath, consider its physical properties. Go through the checklist on pages 4 and 5 and think about the things you want to change.

PHYSICAL PROPERTIES

Room Size	Existing Bath	New Bath
North wall	_____	_____
East wall	_____	_____
South wall	_____	_____
West wall	_____	_____
Total square feet	_____	_____
Ceiling height	_____	_____

Flooring	Yes	No	Where?
Bamboo	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Carpet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Ceramic tile	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Concrete	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Cork	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Laminate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Linoleum	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Vinyl sheet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Vinyl tile	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Wood	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Wood (engineered)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Stone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Other:	_____		

Toilet

1-piece low profile
 2-piece standard height
 High-efficiency model
 Wall hung
 Round seat
 Elongated seat
 Comfort height
 Bidet
 Other: _____

Shower

Shower wall material _____
 Shower floor/pan material _____
 Shower door material _____
 Bench seat: Yes No _____ Material _____
 Showerhead: _____ Type _____ Finish _____
 Body spray: Yes No _____ Finish _____
 Handheld shower: Yes No _____ Finish _____
 Steam Yes No
 Sauna Yes No
 Accessible/no curb Yes No

Surfaces	Vanity	Shower Walls	Tub	Walls
Laminate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Solid-surfacing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Engineered stone (quartz)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Granite	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marble	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cultured marble	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tile	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wood	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Concrete	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other:	_____			

Bathtub

Material:
 Cast iron
 Fiberglass
 Cultured marble
 Steel
 Acrylic
 Copper
 Stone
 Other: _____

Configuration:
 Platform
 Skirted
 Platform with steps
 Freestanding
Fixtures:
Tub filler faucet:
 Deck-mount
 Wall-mount
 Floor-mount
Finish: _____

Hand-held sprayer: Yes No
Finish: _____

Special Features:
 Jetted Yes No
 Soaking tub Yes No

Vanity

Style:
 Contemporary
 Transitional
 Traditional
 Period look (specify) _____
Door surface:
 Wood Species _____ Finish _____
 Laminate or vinyl thermal overlay _____
 Multiple surfaces Yes No
 Cabinet hardware: Yes No
 Medicine cabinets: Yes No
 Defogging mirror: Yes No
 Other: _____

BATH WISH LIST

PHYSICAL PROPERTIES

Lavatory/Sink

Material:

- Porcelain
 - Glass
 - Cast iron
 - Stainless steel
 - Decorative metal
 - Composite
 - Stone
- Configuration:**
- Pedestal
 - Top-mount
 - Under-mount
 - Wall-hung
 - Vessel
 - Integral/seamless

Other: _____

Fixtures:

Deck-mount:

- 4-inch center _____ Finish
- 8-inch center _____ Finish
- Single-hole _____ Finish

Wall-mount:

_____ Finish

Other: _____

Accessories

- Glass shelves Qty _____ Finish _____
- Medicine cabinet Qty _____ Finish _____
- Mirror Qty _____ Finish _____
- Towel bars Qty _____ Finish _____
- Towel rings Qty _____ Finish _____
- Robe hooks Qty _____ Finish _____
- Shower grab bars Qty _____ Finish _____
- Tub grab bars Qty _____ Finish _____
- Toilet grab bars Qty _____ Finish _____
- Toilet paper holder Qty _____ Finish _____
- Television Qty _____ Finish _____

Ventilation & Lighting

- | | Yes | No |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Fan | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Fan/light combo | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Fan/light/heat combo | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Ambient (general) lighting | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Skylight | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Task lighting (vanity/dressing table) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Accent (decorative) lighting | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other: _____ | | |

MONEY MANAGEMENT

Budget Planning

- I plan to hire a contractor for all the work. Yes No
- I plan to do some of the work myself. Yes No
- I plan to do the decor, paint, etc. myself. Yes No
- I plan to do all the work at once. Yes No
- I plan to do the work and replace items in stages. Yes No
- This is the realistic total I hope to spend: \$ _____
- This is the absolute most I can spend: \$ _____

Financing Method:

- All cash/savings
- Home-equity loan/line of credit
- Pay cash _____%, Borrow _____%

NOTES:

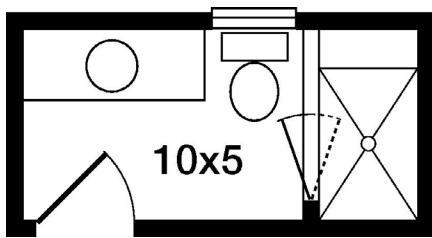
DESIGNING THE SPACE

Planning an efficient layout and following recommended design guidelines can help ensure you end up with a stylish bathroom that's safe, functional, and comfortable.

Are you working with limited square footage? Go to bhg.com/smallbathideas to see tips for making the most of every inch.

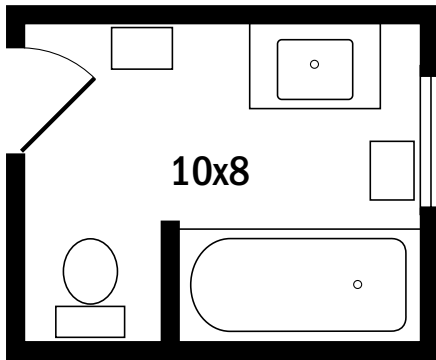
FLOOR PLAN IDEAS

Use these sample floor plans to gather ideas about placement of elements. Whatever the size of your bath, keep in mind that the more walls that contain plumbing pipes, the higher the price tag. If budget is a concern, limit plumbing fixtures to one wall; for the greatest design flexibility, opt for a three-wall layout.



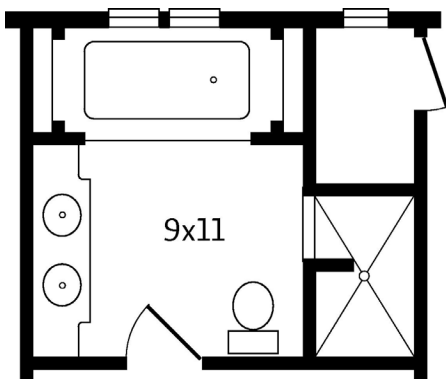
THREE-QUARTER BATH (NO TUB)

All plumbing on the same wall saves labor and supply expenses. With only one sink and a shower, this is a popular and hardworking plan.



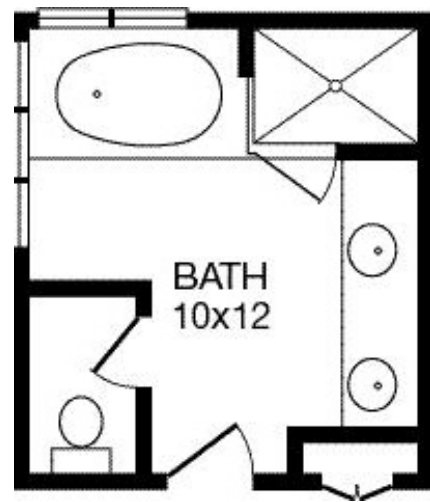
FULL BATH

A tub/shower combination is a good choice for many baths. The tub's end wall and the way the door opens help keep the toilet separate from the rest of the space. There is room for a long vanity or two sinks.



POSH BATH

The large tub is framed by an alcove with end shelves, and the double vanity saves space with shallow ends. The walk-in shower saves money because it doesn't require a door.



POSH PLUS BATH

This plan has it all: a separate shower, a corner tub under windows, a double vanity, and a private toilet compartment.

DOUBLE THE COMFORT

Are you planning a master bathroom that can easily accommodate two users during the morning rush hour? Consider including a separate shower—or better yet a walk-in shower with multiple showerheads. Install dual vanities on separate walls to enhance convenience, and include the toilet in a private enclosure.

DESIGNING THE SPACE

To ensure your bath is functional, comfortable, and safe, use these measurements and recommended clearances. Measurements are suggested minimums unless otherwise noted. The following recommendations were adapted from National Kitchen & Bath Association (NKBA) guidelines. Visit nkba.org for more guidelines or to find a certified bath designer.



1. DOORWAYS

At least 32 inches wide

2. WALKWAYS

At least 36 inches wide

3. SHOWER

Minimum interior dimensions are 34 x 34 inches (36 x 36 is better). Swinging shower doors must open into the bathroom, away from the shower's interior.

4. TUB/SHOWER CONTROLS

In a shower/tub combination, mount the faucet 30–34 inches above the bottom of the tub. Set shower controls at 48–52 inches for ease of use while standing. Mount a showerhead 69–72 inches from the floor. Shower controls should be accessible from both inside and outside the shower.

5. VANITY HEIGHT

Standard height is 30–32 inches. Raise it for tall users. In bathrooms with two vanities, one could be 30–34 inches high and the other 34–42 inches high.

6. SINK

Plan at least 15–18 inches from its center to a side wall. If you install two sinks in the same counter, allow 36 inches, center line to center line, between them. Allow at least 8 inches between the edge of a sink and the end of the counter for landing space.

7. BACKSPASH

Allow 8 inches or more between the top of the sink and the bottom of a medicine cabinet or mirror to catch any splashes from the sink.

8. TOILET

Allow at least 16 inches from the center of the toilet to an obstruction or fixture on either side. Toilet seats are usually 14 inches above the floor. Toilet compartments should be at least 36 inches wide by 66 inches deep, with a swing-out or pocket door.

9. TOWEL BAR

Provide at least 36 inches of towel bar space per person. Mount towel bars 26–42 inches above the floor.

KEEP YOUR BATHROOM SAFE

Follow these design guidelines from the NKBA to enhance accessibility and ensure safety for all users.

- Install slip-resistant flooring in all areas of the bathroom.
- Ease entries into tub and shower areas. Eliminate steps leading into the shower, and include a tub surround with a platform so you can sit down while entering or exiting the tub.
- Select shatterproof shower doors. If the shower door is hinged, install it so the door opens into the room instead of the shower.
- Install pressure-balanced and temperature-controlled valves to prevent scalding. Make sure fixtures are easily accessible from outside the tub and shower to prevent stretching to reach the controls.
- Add grab bars throughout the bath — especially near the entrance of the tub — to prevent falls. New grab bars offer stylish looks and double as toilet paper holders, shower shelves, and towel racks.
- Add a bench inside the shower.
- Install an emergency shut-off for a whirlpool tub.
- Use ground-fault circuit interrupters on electrical outlets; these shut off when a hazard, such as moisture, is sensed.
- Use cabinet locks to prevent children from accessing household cleaners and medications.

SETTING A BUDGET

Before you start construction work or hire any professionals, sit down and establish a budget for your home improvement project—then stick to it.

Figuring out a budget for your bathroom project may not be as much fun as selecting fixtures and paint colors, but it's just as important—if not more so.

To begin, think about how long you plan to stay in your home. If you plan to move within a few years, investigate home prices in your area and be careful to keep your budget in line with the average home price. In general, aim to spend about 5 to 10 percent of your home's value on a bathroom remodeling project. On the other hand, if you plan to remain in your home for many years, plan to spend as much as you can comfortably afford to create the bathroom of your dreams.

To determine what you are comfortable spending on your bathroom project, make a list of all your debts and figure out your monthly gross income. From here, determine the maximum monthly payment you can afford to spend on remodeling costs and talk to a lender about financing options, if necessary.

Remember that building and remodeling almost always end up costing more than you expect. Experts recommend adding a cushion of at least 10 percent to your overall budget to account for unexpected surprises along the way.

10 WAYS TO KEEP YOUR BUDGET ON TRACK

1. HAVE FIRM GOALS AND STICK TO THEM

It can be easy to get distracted by all the glamorous products on the market, but they can quickly derail your budget. Focus on your main goals and choose products accordingly, opting for a couple of splurges along the way.

2. BRING IN THE PROS

Architects and designers increase initial costs, but they can save you money in the long run by helping you avoid design pitfalls and suggesting ways to save money on design and materials.

3. KEEP IT SIMPLE

If you're remodeling, try to keep load-bearing walls where they are and avoid rerouting plumbing and electrical lines. Varied rooflines, curved walls, arches, and bump-outs all enhance the character of a bath, but they also bump up the cost.

4. CHECK CONTRACTOR REFERENCES

If you'll be hiring a contractor to help you with construction work, be sure to ask references about the contractor's communication skills, follow-through, and adherence to deadlines. If the contractor regularly misses deadlines and communicates poorly, you'll likely end up with inflated bills and extra stress.



5. ORDER MATERIALS IN ADVANCE

Some custom items, such as windows and shower doors, take several weeks to arrive. Keep your job's progress on track by having materials on hand before any work begins.

6. STICK WITH WHAT'S IN STOCK

Custom windows, cabinetry, and other items can drive up project costs. Look for standard and semicustom goods, which are often available in a range of styles and price levels. Opt for prefabricated items, such as shower and tub enclosures, to save time and labor costs.

7. LOOK FOR DEALS

Shop your local home center for clearance items, end-of-season sales, discontinued products, and floor models. You can also find great deals online—just be sure you know what you're buying.

8. KEEP CHANGES TO A MINIMUM

Some changes are inevitable, but making changes to remodeling or building plans midway through the project is another quick way to ruin your budget. If you make changes after plumbing, electrical, and drywall work is done, you'll likely have to tear out finished work and start over—and pay for the work twice.

9. MAKE SMART TRADE-OFFS

If you're forced to make difficult choices to keep your budget on track, sacrifice items that can easily be retrofitted later. Choose less-expensive lights, faucets, window treatments, and door and cabinet hardware, and put your money toward cabinets, countertops, and other labor-intensive items.

10. HELP OUT WITH THE WORK

Even inexperienced do-it-yourselfers can remove old cabinets, fixtures and other items that will be replaced. And once the major construction work is done, you can step back in and help with painting, installing faucets and lights, and other finishing details.

WHAT PROS DO YOU NEED?

Take time to consider the details of how the construction work will be handled — from what work you'll do yourself to detailed schedules relating to what will be completed when.

Can you handle the work yourself or do you need to hire professionals to help with design or installation? If you're planning a complete bathroom overhaul, you'll likely benefit from design help, even if you are willing to do the construction work yourself. To find a qualified professional, ask family and friends for references, visit a home show or neighborhood home tour, or look at the list of designers on the National Kitchen & Bath Association website: NKBA.org. Here's a brief description of various professionals in the remodeling and building industry—and a look at how they can help you.



GENERAL CONTRACTOR

A contractor manages the construction work required to create your dream bathroom. They may do the work themselves, or more likely, hire subcontractors to handle part or all of the project. If you are planning a smaller remodeling project, you may not need professional design services and can work directly with an experienced contractor

DESIGN-BUILD CONTRACTOR

A design-build firm can oversee both the design and construction services, thus simplifying the remodeling and building process. Some firms have architects on staff, while others use certified designers. Since a design-build firm oversees your project from initial design through completion, they can help ensure your project stays on budget.

ARCHITECTS

If you're planning a major remodeling or building project, an architect can help you determine the overall design and create construction drawings that are required for obtaining building permits. Architects have formal education and experience and are licensed by the state.

DESIGNERS

These professionals can also help you create the construction drawings for your project. Certified bath designers specialize in bathroom design and must meet specified educational requirements and follow a professional code of ethics outlined by the NKBA.

WHAT TO ASK WHEN INTERVIEWING A PROFESSIONAL

You can significantly increase your chances of a successful building or remodeling project by carefully interviewing professionals and checking references. Here are a few questions to help you find the right person for your job.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN IN BUSINESS?

Look for a firm with an established business history in your area, and ask contractors for a current copy of their license and their certification of insurance.

WHAT IS THE TIME FRAME FOR STARTING THE PROJECT?

Also ask about work schedules and an estimated time frame for completing the job.

HOW IS YOUR FIRM ORGANIZED?

Find out if they have employees or hire subcontractors. Will there be a project supervisor or lead carpenter to oversee your project?

HOW MANY SIMILAR PROJECTS HAVE YOU COMPLETED IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS?

Look for designers and/or contractors who are familiar with your desired design style and/or project type.

WHAT PERCENTAGE OF YOUR BUSINESS IS REPEAT OR REFERRAL BUSINESS?

This answer can give you a helpful hint about customer satisfaction.

MAY I HAVE A LIST OF REFERENCES?

Ask for a minimum of three references, and specifically inquire about projects that are similar to your own. You can also see if the designer or contractor can arrange visits to finished job sites.

* Questions are compiled from a list provided by the National Association of the Remodeling Industry.

PLANNING THE PROJECT

SIGNING A CONTRACT

Whether you're hiring an architect, designer, general contractor, or subcontractors, it's best to have everyone sign on the dotted line before work begins.



DIY TIP

Planning to act as your own general contractor? Don't forget to check local building codes and acquire the necessary building permits before starting any construction work. Unsure if you need a building permit? If you're adding a new window or door, moving a sink, installing new electrical wiring, or altering the footprint of your home, you may need to obtain a permit. Check with your local permitting office to find out about codes in your area.

EXAMINE THE CONTRACT

If you'll be hiring a contractor to help you with your bathroom project, be sure to carefully examine the contract. This is the document that outlines the scope of the project and ensures that everyone is in agreement about who will handle what. Consider having a legal professional review the document before signing it, and make sure you understand everything that is included (and excluded) from the document. Also, make sure the contract contains the following:

- The contractor's name, address, phone, and license number (if applicable)
- Details about materials for the project, including size, color, model and brand name for all products
- A clear description of what the contractor will and will not do, such as protect personal property at the job site, daily cleanup, and cleanup upon completion of the job
- Approximate start date and completion dates
- The total price, payment schedule, and any cancellation penalties
- A full or limited warranty covering materials and workmanship for a minimum of one year (this should also include the name and address of the party who will honor the warranty—the contractor, distributor, or manufacturer)
- A binding arbitration clause that may allow you to resolve disputes without costly litigation if a disagreement occurs

CHANGE ORDERS

Most remodeling and building projects will require a change order at some point—a written document to alter, change, or remove items found in the original contract. You may change your mind about a specific product or design, the contractor may suggest changing some aspect of the design, or extra work may be needed to fix an unexpected discovery, such as termite damage. Make sure that any change to the contract is done in writing and signed by all parties before any work is completed. Before signing, ask about the price of the changes and the added work time they may require. Be sure to keep a copy of any change orders for your records.

WHAT TO EXPECT DURING CONSTRUCTION

Here's how to handle the mess and upheaval during a bathroom project.

PREPARE MENTALLY AND EMOTIONALLY

Even if you hate the way your bathroom looks now, you may be unprepared for the emotional upheaval that comes with tearing a room to the bare studs. It doesn't look pretty—and you can suddenly find yourself worried about how it's all going to come together. Take plenty of time to assess your needs and craft a design before starting construction to increase your confidence about the finished product.

TALK ABOUT JOB SITE RULES

Discuss worker behavior expectations with your contractor before construction begins. For example, are you OK with smoking on the job site? Can any type of music be played, and what volume is acceptable? Will workers take off their shoes or wear protective booties over their shoes to avoid tracking in dirt and mud? How much cleanup are workers expected to do? Also ask about typical work schedules, so you'll know when to expect workers to show up at your door.

ESTABLISH A PROJECT TIMELINE AND SCHEDULE

Whether you are doing the work yourself or hiring a general contractor, outline the sequence of each step of the project and note who will be doing the work and what materials are needed. If you've figured out a plan in advance, you can ensure all products are on site when they're ready to be installed and avoid uncertainty and confusion.

TAKE STEPS TO CONTROL DUST

There's virtually no way to eliminate dust at a construction site, but you can successfully minimize it. Seal off work areas with plastic sheeting, and set up an entrance for workers so they don't have to disturb the hanging plastic or tramp through the rest of the house. During the remodeling project, plan to clean the rest of your house frequently—construction dust is minuscule and can find a way through even the best protection. Also consider getting your home's ductwork cleaned after construction is done.

KEEP KIDS SAFE

Power tools, stacks of lumber, and exposed electrical wires all pose serious dangers for children. Ask workers to put tools away and plan to shut and/or lock doors when possible. Extra trips to the park, library, or grandma's house can also help keep kids out of harm's way.

MAINTAIN A FUNCTIONAL TOILET AND FAUCET

If you have multiple bathrooms, make sure one is operational at all times to minimize inconvenience and disruption. If you must shut down all toilets for an extended period, consider moving into a hotel room for a brief time.



SET UP A COMMUNICATION CENTER

Put up a message board at the job site where you and your contractor can leave questions and comments about the day's work. Also establish a consistent day and time for project meetings with your team to discuss work progress, schedules, and any unexpected discoveries.

PROTECT VALUABLES

Hire workers you feel you can trust, but keep in mind that all the hammering and demolition work can cause what feels like minor earthquakes in your house. If you have prized collections or delicate objects in your bathroom or an adjacent room, it's best to pack them away until construction work is done.

CREATE STORAGE FOR CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS

Whether you are acting as your own general contractor or have hired someone else to handle this task, you can avoid project delays by ordering materials in advance. But you'll need a place to store the lumber and materials, so choose a safe place and clean out the area well before orders arrive.

THE FINISH LINE

Before making your final payment, plan to walk through your finished bathroom with your contractor, architect, or designer and discuss anything that still needs to be changed or completed. Often firms will use a punch list, which is a written document that lists all the corrections or changes that must be completed to the homeowner's satisfaction. Once you agree that these items have been completed, your final payment will be due.

CHOOSING PRODUCTS

VANITIES, CABINETS & STORAGE

Start selecting cabinetry, fixtures, and materials early so you'll have time to research all the options and figure out what's right for you.



DIY TIP

Shop thrift stores or recycle furniture from other rooms to create one-of-a-kind bath storage. Convert a dresser into a custom vanity or add vintage shelves for displaying collectibles. Remember to apply a moisture-resistant sealer to prevent wood from warping.

CABINET BASICS

Like kitchen units, ready-made bath cabinets come in two basic designs. American-style framed cabinets have a face frame applied to the front of the cabinet boxes. Door hinges are often visible. European, or frameless, cabinets have no face frame. Doors cover almost all of each cabinet box, and hardware is hidden when the doors are closed. The former suggests a traditional look; the latter feels more contemporary.

Stock cabinets offer the fewest variables in materials, finishes, sizes, and details, but they're also the most affordable. Semicustom and custom cabinets increase your options—but also your cost, and typically your delivery time.

STYLE DETAILS

Exotic woods, specialty finishes, and milled details can bring a furniture look to the vanity area and upgrade your bath's overall style. Remember the decorative impact of knobs and pulls. Use this cabinet jewelry to dress up a simple style or emphasize a design theme. Match your faucet finish or not—it's up to you.

STORAGE FEATURES

When selecting a vanity, consider how you'll use it. Must it also store towels and cosmetics? Most vanities combine drawer and shelf space. Customize the capacity of stock models with wire shelves, a pullout wastebasket, towel rods, hooks, and drawer dividers.

Look for medicine cabinets with adjustable shelves, built-in electrical outlets, and a mirror defogger (if you can afford a splurge). Use cosmetic organizers to keep small items tidy. If you're remodeling, choose the same type of medicine cabinet that you're replacing (a surface-mount or recessed unit) to avoid breaking into the wall.

CHOOSING PRODUCTS

COUNTERTOPS, FLOORING & WALLS



Make sure the materials you select for bathroom walls, floors, and countertops are practical as well as stylish. It's important to consider maintenance needs and durability in this high-moisture environment.

COUNTERTOP MATERIALS

NATURAL STONE adds elegance and offers several options. Granite is durable and curling-iron proof but requires professional installation and periodic sealing to repel stains. Marble and limestone are classic and luxurious (read: higher cost) but are softer than granite so they can scratch and stain. Buying direct from a stone yard may cost more, but you'll see the exact piece you'll get.

SOLID-SURFACING countertops blend plastic, stone, or glass into a resin or cement base. Find panels in neutrals, pastels, and stone looks. Any scratches in the nonporous material can be sanded away. Matching sinks create a seamless installation.

QUARTZ-SURFACING is also called engineered stone because its mix of ground quartz, resins, and pigments forms consistent stonelike patterns. The surface is nonporous and scratch-resistant.

LAMINATE is affordable and resists water and stains, but the thin top layer can scorch and dull over time. Preformed countertop/backsplash units are easy to install and easy to clean (no seam along the wall). Longer pattern repeats help this manufactured material better mimic natural stone.

CULTURED MARBLE contains natural marble chips embedded in plastic resin. It comes in in sheet form and in standard counter depths.

CERAMIC AND PORCELAIN TILES, when glazed, repel moisture and some stains. Avoid lead-base glazes. In porcelain tile, color goes all the way through so scratches and dents are less visible. Choose larger tiles for fewer grout lines and lower maintenance.

GLASS AND GLASS-AGGREGATE counters set a glamorous, shimmering mood. Insist on tempered glass for safety and professional installation for security.

FLOORING

RESILIENT SHEET flooring is soft underfoot, durable, and moisture-resistant. Vinyl floors offer a wide range of patterns with realistic textures that mimic the look of stone and wood. Eco-friendly linoleum comes in many colors, while cork is naturally quiet and germ-resistant.

STONE adds elegance and durability, but it can be slippery when wet and often requires professional installation. Choose a honed or textured finish for slip-resistance, and opt for smaller tiles in the shower.

HARDWOOD offers a classic beauty but must be coated with a urethane finish to protect against moisture. Or you can choose engineered wood; its fused layers add stability in humid environments.

LAMINATE flooring can be a convincing, easy-care substitute for wood, tile, or stone. Choose planks or tiles.

WALL TREATMENT OPTIONS

TILES are generally water-resistant, and if they chip, they're easy to replace. Ceramic, porcelain, and glass tiles are all offered in a wide range of colors and designs. Mixing accent tiles and field tiles can help you create a custom look. Both large-format and mosaic tiles can make a bath feel larger. Run tiles to the ceiling to emphasize height. Mosaics in glass, stone, and metal can be a DIY project if bought on a mesh backing. For durability, be sure to use only wall tile for walls and floor tile for floors. Tiles require little maintenance, but the grout may need to be resealed or redone after a few years.

PAINT is the least expensive option for walls and ceilings. Gloss and semigloss finishes work best in the bath's humid environment, but keep in mind that they'll accentuate any irregularities on the walls. Use epoxy paint if you want to cover a tile, glass, or porcelain surface.

WALLCOVERINGS need to be tough to stand up to use in this humid room. Opt for vinyl coverings (especially vinyl laminated to fabric) rather than traditional wallpaper for the best results.

MONEY-WISE

SAVE MORE: For stylish tub surrounds, select cultured marble sheets instead of ceramic tile. You'll save money on labor costs, and the marble sheets are easier to clean. Consider covering walls with inexpensive beaded-board panels for a charming cottage look.

SPEND SMART: Install radiant-heat panels or mats below tile, vinyl, and hardwood floors to keep feet warm on cold winter days. Electric versions can operate on timers and warm defined areas, such as in front of the vanity or beside the tub.

CHOOSING PRODUCTS

SINK STYLES

These basins are much more than utilitarian pieces—they can create an elegant focal point and set the tone for the bath's overall design.

1. VANITY-TOP sinks are among the most budget-friendly. Round, oval, or square bowls of porcelain, glass, ceramic, or metal can be installed in three ways:

1. Drop-in, or self-rimming, sinks simply drop into a hole slightly smaller than the sink's rim and rest on the countertop surface. The slight raised rim helps capture splashes. **2.** Undermount sinks attach below the counter surface, which is usually made of stone, quartz, or solid-surfacing material. The sink's edges—and those of the surrounding countertop—must be finished perfectly for a neat, tidy look and easy cleanup. **3.** Integral sinks are made from the same material as the countertop. Professional installers finish the seam to be invisible. They are also available at home centers.

2. CONSOLE sinks merge the function of a vanity with furniture styling. Wood or metal legs form an airy base for a countertop of wood, glass, or stone. If you don't like the look of exposed plumbing pipes, choose a console with shelves to hold stacked towels, baskets, or trays.

3. PEDESTAL sinks bring vintage character to the bathroom. These sinks occupy less space than boxy vanities, which offer more storage. Choose a model with a wide deck or a towel rail to amplify storage space. Opt for a model with a more streamlined design for an updated take on classic style.

4. ABOVE-COUNTER or VESSEL SINKS bring a sculptural presence to the vanity area. These statement sinks come in many shapes and are available in glass, ceramic, wood, or metal. The raised bowls can mean less bending and greater comfort for adults but may be difficult to use for children or people with disabilities. With the outside of the bowl exposed, you have more surface area to clean. If you opt for an above-counter sink, you may need a shorter vanity or console and a taller or wall-mount faucet. As a compromise, recess the sink partially so only some of its exterior shows above the countertop.

5. WALL-MOUNT sinks are a boon to cramped quarters. They can be installed at any height, with open space beneath for wheelchair access or freestanding storage. Most wall-mounts are porcelain, but you can use hefty brackets to support a countertop with a drop-in or vessel-style basin (be sure the brackets can bear the weight).



SINK MATERIALS

Vitreous china is inexpensive and cleans easily, but it can chip. Stone and porcelain-enameled cast iron are durable but heavy. Fiberglass-reinforced plastic is lightweight, but it can show wear. Cast polymer and cultured marble may chip. Brushed or satin-finish stainless steel hides water spots. Glass must be tempered for safety.

CHOOSING PRODUCTS

FAUCET TYPES

Bath faucets need to look great, operate smoothly, and stand up to daily abuse. Choose a style and finish that complements your bath, but pay attention to function and durability, too.

Faucet styles range from ornate Victorian designs to taps with modern, streamlined looks. Cross-shape handles offer vintage charm, while large wing levers add contemporary appeal. Two-handle models let you adjust water temperature more precisely with independent hot and cold controls, while single-handle models show off a sleek and contemporary aesthetic.

1. WIDESPREAD

These faucets have a separate spout and handles, spaced up to 10 inches apart. The valves and mixing chamber are hidden underneath the sink or counter.

2. CENTER SET

This compact style (water lines 4 inches apart) combines the spout and handles in one unit that mounts on the sink deck or behind it on the countertop.

3. SINGLE HANDLE

Only one hole pierces the sink deck or countertop, saving space and allowing easy cleanup. A top- or side-mount lever or knob controls flow and temperature.

4. BRIDGE

Ideal for undermount sinks, this nostalgic style's exposed channel links spoke-style handles and a curvy spout for installation directly on the countertop.

5. WALL-MOUNT

Plumbed through the wall behind and above the sink, this type must be installed per the manufacturer's specifications to minimize splashing. The ideal position for the water stream is just behind the sink drain.



TUB FILLERS

Today's tub fillers blend function and sophistication and complement a range of design styles. A deck mount or Roman tub filler works well with a platform tub and is simply a larger version of a lavatory faucet. Floor-mount tub fillers enhance freestanding tubs; opt for a vintage design to complement a traditional claw-foot tub. The common three-wall alcove tub usually includes a wall-mount fixture with the spout placed a little past the tub's edge. To add a touch of luxury to your tub area, choose a waterfall fixture that transforms the chore of filling the

MONEY-WISE

SAVE MORE: If your budget is limited, opt for a chrome finish. And keep in mind that a standard two-handle faucet is likely to cost less than a single handle faucet.

SPEND SMART: Look for WaterSense-labeled faucets that reduce water consumption. And choose a faucet with replaceable internal parts, so you don't have to replace the whole faucet if something breaks.

CHOOSING PRODUCTS

SHOWERHEADS & SHOWER ENCLOSURES

Combine multiple showerheads and body sprays to create a spa-like retreat. Whether you install a combination tub/shower unit or splurge on a separate shower, it's easy to integrate luxurious features that elevate your showering experience.



DIY TIP

Don't want to hire a plumber to upgrade your shower? Look for easy-to-install pre-plumbed shower panels (shown, left). These all-in-one units include multiple showerheads and body sprays in one compact unit. They can be easily retrofitted into most existing showers.



SHOWERHEAD OPTIONS

The easiest and least expensive shower upgrade is switching out a standard showerhead with a model that offers a range of massaging spray patterns. When shopping, look for WaterSense-labeled products that use no more than 2.0 gallons of water per minute (rather than the standard 2.5 gpm). To ensure good performance with less water, look for new models that infuse air with the water to create a more voluminous spray. Also consider adding a handheld showerhead to the mix; models that slide up and down on a bar mounted to the wall can be an ideal choice for a shower that will be used by people of varying heights. For added luxury, consider installing a ceiling-mount fixture, such as an oversize rain-style showerhead.

BODY SPRAYS

If your shower space is large enough, or you're planning plumbing lines in adjacent walls, consider splurging on body sprays designed to pummel you pleasantly all over. Be sure to consult a plumber to determine how much work is involved and whether your home's water pressure can supply the expanded spray system.

DIGITAL CONTROLS

For the ultimate convenience, consider installing one of the new digital showering systems. These systems allow you to set preferences for water temperature, spray modes, and more—for multiple users. They also help save water, since they will shut off the water and hold that temperature until you get in.

SHOWER ENCLOSURES AND DOORS

Enclosures range from compact corner units to spacious shower rooms. Some prefabricated surrounds are sold as kits, which are easy to bring home and assemble inside your bathroom. Glass or translucent plastic doors help a shower feel big and bright. Choose sliding doors for tub/shower combos, swinging doors for freestanding units, and bifold or neo-angle doors for corner enclosures. Hinged shower shields partially screen a shower opening. Nearby flooring should be able to take a bit of spray.

CHOOSING PRODUCTS

BATHTUB MATERIALS & INSTALLATION

Thanks to smart materials and a variety of installation options, it's easy to create a soothing soaking spot in any bath.

TUB MATERIALS

Different tub materials offer perks that fit various price points and lifestyles. Take a look at the options and determine what will work best for you. Keep in mind, however, that not all tubs are available in all materials.

CAST-IRON tubs are among the most durable and long-lasting fixtures in the home. But these tubs are extremely heavy; even a small cast-iron tub will likely require extra floor support.

ACRYLIC has a high-gloss look that's similar to enameled cast iron but weighs much less. Acrylic is more durable and less prone to color-fade than fiberglass tubs. Repairs are much easier than those that must be made to porcelain surfaces.

FIBERGLASS tubs, also referred to as gel-coat fiberglass or fiberglass-reinforced plastic (FRP), feature a glossy, easy-to-clean surface. It's not as expensive as acrylic, but it's also not as durable and can crack if something hits it hard enough.

COMPOSITE tubs are made from an engineered material coated in enamel. They offer the heat retention of a cast-iron tub at a third of the weight—so they are ideal candidates for upper-level bathrooms.

CULTURED MARBLE is a solid-surfacing material comparable to quartz countertops that is produced from crushed marble set in resin and then covered with a clear gelcoat. Scratches can be buffed out of this material, but cracks can't be repaired.

PORCELAIN-ON-STEEL tubs offer the look and heat retention of cast iron at a lighter weight. Prices can vary, but keep in mind that you generally get what you pay for; lower-priced models tend to chip and sound echoey.

INSTALLATION METHODS

Select an installation method that works best with your space requirements to transform your tub into a stunning focal point.

ALCOVE

Commonly referred to as a recessed tub, this installation is used for rectangular tubs adjacent to three walls. If you're replacing a standard tub, take note of the drain location as you face the accessible side—this is how you determine if you need a left-hand or right-hand installation to match up with existing plumbing.



PLATFORM

Tubs made for platform installation drop into a deck structure usually built into its own enclosure, often adjacent to the shower. This method works well with whirlpools and air baths, since space below the deck can house and hide pumps, plumbing, and hardware. (Keep these parts accessible with a removable panel.)

UNDERMOUNT

The difference between a platform tub and an undermount tub is mostly a matter of aesthetics. An undermount's rim is covered with a deck top—usually stone or tile that coordinates with surrounding materials—and it's supported from underneath, rather than hanging from the deck as a platform tub does.

FREESTANDING

As the name implies, this tub stands on its own on the bathroom floor without additional support, creating a stunning focal point. This type of installation must be placed close to plumbing lines, so ask your professional if this is an option in your space.

SOAK IN SERENITY

To enhance your soaking spot, consider selecting a whirlpool, air tub, or soaking tub. A whirlpool forces water through strategically placed jets, while an air tub pushes a soothing, steady stream of air into the water. Because extra plumbing is required, whirlpools tend to be more expensive than air tubs. Extra-deep soaking tubs allow you to submerge your entire body and are available as built-in or freestanding models.

KEEP IN MIND: If you plan to add a large whirlpool tub, make sure your water heater can handle the new addition, or consider adding a water heater dedicated to the tub.

CHOOSING PRODUCTS

TOILET FEATURES

Look for new designs that conserve water, enhance comfort, and ease cleaning tasks.

EFFICIENT PERFORMANCE

New technology allows toilets to use less water without sacrificing performance. Today, the standard toilet uses 1.6 gallons per flush rather than the 3 to 7 gallons used by older models—and some new models offer even greater water savings. Since toilets account for nearly 30 percent of residential water usage, purchasing an efficient toilet can greatly decrease your home's water usage.

High-efficiency toilets employ powerful flushing systems and typically use 1.28 gallons per flush, instead of the standard 1.6. Dual-flush models incorporate two different buttons to allow you to choose between a 0.8-and-1.6 gallon flush. When shopping, look for a WaterSense-labeled product that has been tested to ensure both high efficiency and strong performance.

COMFORT FEATURES

New toilets offer style and comfort, as well as performance. Look for these features when shopping:

COMFORT-HEIGHT MODELS stand at chair height, making it easier to get up and down.

ELONGATED BOWLS offer greater comfort. (Although keep in mind that round bowls take up less space, so they may be a better choice for a small bathroom.)

WIDER FLAPPER VALVES and larger trapways decrease the potential for clogging.

QUIET-CLOSE HINGES ensure the toilet seat never slams.

TRANSITIONAL TOILET SEATS for young children are integrated into some standard toilet seats, eliminating the need to take potty-training seats on and off the family toilet.

SLEEK DESIGNS with concealed trapways and one-piece construction ease cleaning tasks.



MONEY-WISE

SPEND SMART: Bidets offer a cleansing spray of water, as well as deluxe features such as adjustable water temperature and heated seats. If you want this top-of-the-line technology at a more affordable price point, look for bidet seats that can be attached to existing toilet seats.

LIGHTING & VENTILATION

A good lighting plan will make your bathroom really shine, and efficient ventilation will help ensure healthy indoor-air quality. Here's what you need to know when choosing light fixtures and bath fans.

LIGHTING

In recent years bathrooms have become more than just utilitarian spaces. Now they are luxurious rooms for recharging and relaxing. As such, they need an efficient lighting plan that includes task lighting in targeted areas and overall lighting to set the sophisticated mood. Here are the most important components of a good lighting plan:

1. TASK LIGHTING

Plan to include hardworking task lighting at the vanities, where much of the grooming tasks are done. Instead of installing recessed ceiling fixtures that cast shadows on the face, opt for vertical fixtures or sconces on either side of the mirror. If space doesn't allow lighting on both sides of the mirror, you can mount lights directly to the mirror (expect a higher cost) or opt for strip lighting above the mirror that evenly distributes light over the hair and face.

Also plan to include task lighting in the shower and tub areas; the light should be bright enough to ease cleaning and shaving tasks (and allow you to read shampoo labels). Select recessed downlights designed for use in wet areas for either area. If you plan to read in the tub, consider including an adjustable accent light aimed at the tub. If you'll have a separate toilet compartment, plan to include a single recessed downlight or surface fixture in this area as well.

2. AMBIENT LIGHTING

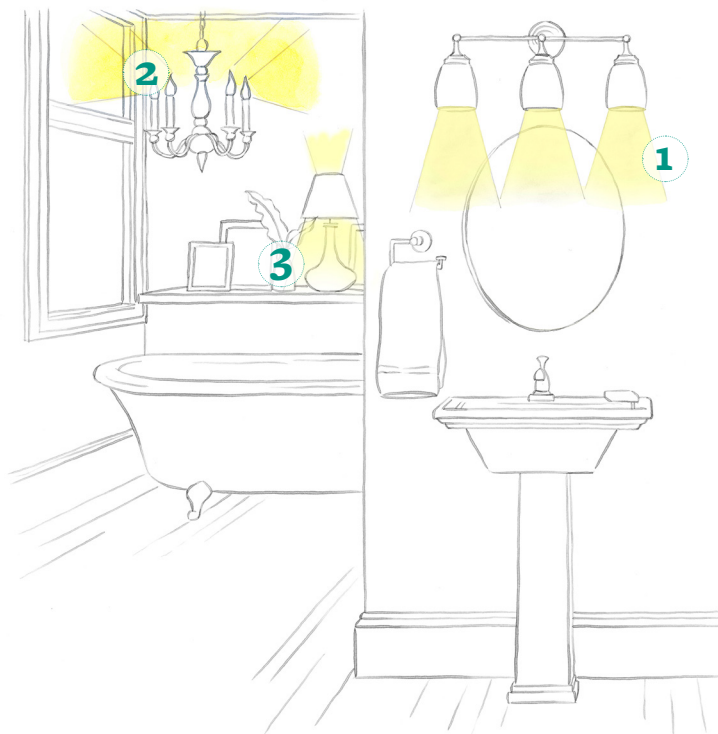
This type of lighting provides general illumination for the room and substitutes for natural lighting when it's not available. Commonly, a surface-mount ceiling light is used in the center of the room, but a pendant light or chandelier can provide mood lighting and additional drama. You can also add a gentle glow around the perimeter of the room with cove lighting. In this scenario, rope lights are hidden behind a molding installed several inches below the ceiling.

3. ACCENT LIGHTING

If you plan to include a favorite piece of artwork or other cherished object in your bath, consider highlighting it with a small recessed spotlight. This technique can also bring extra attention to a custom sink or beautiful tilework.

VENTILATION

Bath fans are especially important in today's airtight homes. They help keep indoor moisture levels down and prevent the growth of mold and mildew. When you shop for a new fan, you'll see they feature different airflow capacities, measured in cubic feet per minute (cfm). The Home Ventilating Institute recommends that fans should have airflow of 1 cfm for every square foot of bathroom space. For bathrooms larger than 100 square feet, add 50 cfm for each toilet, shower, and bathtub, and 100 cfm for a whirlpool tub. The noise level for bath fans is



measured in sones—fans that rate between 0.5 to 1.2 sones are extremely quiet, while fans with ratings of 4.0 or more are noisy. It's best to vent the exhaust outside your home, rather than between floor joists or to an unheated attic, where the humidity can lead to mold that damages floors, walls, and ceiling materials.

MONEY-WISE

SAVE MORE: Opt for an all-in-one ceiling fixture that combines a ventilation fan and lighting. Some models include heating elements for even more versatility.

SPEND SMART: Consider installing a dimmer switch so you can customize the light level and easily change the mood of the space. If you have a double vanity, multiple dimmer controls can allow each person to select their own light levels.

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