

REDESIGN YOUR BATH REDISCOVER YOUR HOME

THE UPSTATE BATHROOM REMODEL GUIDE



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WELCOME TO YOUR REMODELING GUIDE

At Upstate Bath Renewal, we believe your home should reflect your lifestyle, comfort, and personality. This guide was designed to walk you through the remodeling process step by step—giving you the knowledge, inspiration, and confidence to make the right choices for your project.

Inside, you'll find:

- Expert tips on planning your remodel
- Style ideas to spark creativity
- Transparent insights on timelines and costs
- Practical advice to help you avoid common pitfalls

Our goal is simple: to empower you with the tools and information you need to bring your vision to life—whether it's a modern spa-like retreat, a timeless traditional bath, or a space that's uniquely yours.

We're excited to guide you on this journey. Let's redesign your bath—and rediscover your home.

Nick Wells



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CHAPTER 1

BIG DECISIONS

WHY YOUR FIRST CHOICES MATTER

REMODELING YOUR BATHROOM IS EXCITING—BUT IT ALSO COMES WITH A LOT OF BIG DECISIONS. FROM THE OVERALL STYLE TO THE MATERIALS, FIXTURES, AND LAYOUT, THE CHOICES YOU MAKE EARLY IN THE PROCESS WILL SET THE TONE FOR EVERYTHING THAT FOLLOWS. THINK OF THIS CHAPTER AS YOUR ROADMAP—IT'S DESIGNED TO HELP YOU FOCUS ON THE DECISIONS THAT HAVE THE BIGGEST IMPACT ON COST, FUNCTION, AND LONG-TERM SATISFACTION.

THE THREE PILLARS OF A REMODEL DECISION

WHEN OUR TEAM AT UPSTATE BATH RENEWAL HELPS FAMILIES ACROSS THE UPSTATE, WE ENCOURAGE THEM TO CONSIDER THREE PILLARS BEFORE SAYING “YES” TO A DESIGN DIRECTION:

1. **FUNCTIONALITY** – HOW WILL YOU USE THIS SPACE EVERY DAY? DO YOU NEED A WALK-IN SHOWER, A DOUBLE VANITY, OR BETTER STORAGE?
2. **AESTHETICS** – WHAT STYLE FEELS LIKE “YOU”? MODERN MINIMALISM, CLASSIC ELEGANCE, OR A SPA-LIKE RETREAT?
3. **BUDGET & VALUE** – EVERY CHOICE AFFECTS COST. SOME UPGRADES INCREASE YOUR HOME'S RESALE VALUE, WHILE OTHERS ARE MORE ABOUT COMFORT AND PERSONAL PREFERENCE.

PRO TIP:
DON'T RUSH
YOUR FIRST
CHOICES. A
CLEAR VISION
UP FRONT
SAVES TIME,
MONEY, AND
STRESS
DOWN THE
ROAD.



COMMON “BIG DECISION” MOMENTS

HERE ARE THE DECISIONS MOST HOMEOWNERS FACE FIRST:

- TUB VS. SHOWER – DO YOU WANT TO REPLACE YOUR TUB WITH A SLEEK SHOWER, KEEP A TUB FOR RESALE APPEAL, OR INSTALL A SHOWER-TUB COMBO?
- TILE VS. SURROUND SYSTEM – TILE OFFERS TIMELESS STYLE AND FULL CUSTOMIZATION, WHILE WALL SURROUNDS CAN DELIVER EASIER MAINTENANCE.
- VANITY STYLE – STOCK VANITIES SAVE MONEY, WHILE CUSTOM PIECES CREATE A LUXURY CENTERPIECE.
- FLOORING – TILE, WATERPROOF VINYL, OR OTHER MATERIALS ALL CHANGE THE LOOK, FEEL, AND DURABILITY OF YOUR BATHROOM.
- LIGHTING & FIXTURES – SMALL TOUCHES LIKE LED MIRRORS, FAUCETS, AND SHOWERHEADS CAN TRANSFORM BOTH DESIGN AND DAILY CONVENIENCE.



BALANCING WANTS VS. NEEDS

EVERY REMODEL HAS TRADE-OFFS, SO IT HELPS TO SEPARATE YOUR MUST-HAVES FROM YOUR NICE-TO-HAVES. A WALK-IN SHOWER MAY BE NON-NEGOTIABLE, WHILE A HEATED TOWEL RACK COULD BE A LUXURY YOU ADD LATER.

IT'S ALSO IMPORTANT TO RECOGNIZE THAT SOME UPGRADES JUST MAKE SENSE TO TACKLE DURING THE MAIN REMODEL BECAUSE OF HOW THE WORK TIES TOGETHER.

FOR EXAMPLE:

- UPDATING PLUMBING WHILE THE WALLS ARE OPEN
- REPLACING FLOORING WHEN THE OLD SHOWER OR TUB IS REMOVED
- UPGRADING ELECTRICAL FOR BETTER LIGHTING WHILE THE WIRING IS ACCESSIBLE

THESE ITEMS ARE MORE COST-EFFICIENT TO COMPLETE DURING THE MAIN PROJECT RATHER THAN LATER.

ON THE OTHER HAND, THERE ARE ELECTIVE FEATURES THAT CAN BE STAGED INTO A SECOND PHASE IF NEEDED TO SPREAD OUT THE BUDGET:

- INSTALLING UPGRADED FIXTURES OR HARDWARE
- ADDING SMART MIRRORS, LED ACCENTS, OR LUXURY SHOWERHEADS
- FINISHING TOUCHES LIKE DECORATIVE SHELVING, TOWEL WARMERS, OR TRIM UPGRADES

PRO TIP: THINK OF YOUR REMODEL IN TWO CATEGORIES—FOUNDATIONAL CHOICES THAT IMPACT STRUCTURE AND EFFICIENCY, AND LIFESTYLE UPGRADES THAT YOU CAN ADD AS TIME AND BUDGET ALLOW.

WHY CHOOSE UPSTATE BATH RENEWAL?

Locally Owned & Community Focused

We're proud to serve the Upstate as a family-owned company. When you work with us, you're not calling a national chain — you're supporting a local business that cares about your home and your community.

Expertise You Can Trust

With over 8 years of remodeling experience, our team knows what works and what lasts. From waterproofing systems to premium materials, we use the right products and proven techniques so your remodel is built to last.

Clear & Honest Pricing

No hidden costs. No surprises. We provide detailed proposals with clear breakdowns, so you know exactly what you're paying for. Our goal is to give you the best value for your investment.

Our Promise to You

- 5-Year Workmanship Warranty

- Licensed & Insured

- Transparent Communication Every Step

- Dedicated to 100% Satisfaction



CHAPTER 2

SHOWERS



WHY SHOWERS DESERVE EXTRA ATTENTION

For most homeowners, the shower is the centerpiece of the bathroom remodel. It sets the tone for style, drives a large portion of the budget, and determines how easy your space will be to maintain over time. In this chapter, we'll explore the key shower decisions that matter most.

TILE SIZE

Tile size can dramatically affect the look and feel of your shower:

- Large-Format Tile (12x24 or bigger): Sleek, modern, and fewer grout lines to clean. Great for a spa-like retreat.
- Mid-Size Tile (8x8, 12x12): A balanced, timeless option that works in nearly any design.
- Small Tile & Mosaics: Adds texture and visual interest, especially on floors, niches, or accent walls.

PRO TIP:
LARGER TILES
LOOK
BEAUTIFUL BUT
REQUIRE
PRECISE
INSTALLATION.
SMALLER TILES
ADD TRACTION
TO SHOWER
FLOORS. MANY
HOMEOWNERS
CHOOSE A MIX
— LARGE WALL
TILE WITH
MOSAIC
FLOORING.

LAYOUT

Layout is about more than looks — it impacts both function and maintenance:

- Straight-Set/Stacked: Tiles run in a clean grid, simple and classic. Not all tiles can be installed this way.
- Brick/Offset: Staggered joints give a softer, more traditional feel.
- Herringbone or Chevron: Bold and eye-catching, great for feature walls.
- Accent Bands or Niches: Perfect way to add style without overwhelming the space.

MATERIAL

Choosing the right material determines durability, cost, and upkeep:

- Porcelain & Ceramic Tile: Affordable, durable, and low-maintenance — our most popular choice.
- Natural Stone (Marble, Travertine, Slate): Luxurious, unique veining, but requires sealing and regular care.
- Plastic Wall Panels (Acrylic, PVC): Low-maintenance, quick installs, typically a lesser finish.
- Solid Wall Panels (Composite, Quartz): Low-maintenance with fewer seams, but less customizable than tile.

GLASS

Glass is what makes your shower feel open and inviting:

- Frameless Glass: Sleek and modern, highlights the tile work.
- Semi-Frameless: A balance of cost and style, with minimal metal trim.
- Framed Glass: Budget-friendly and durable, though less “high-end” in appearance.
- Frosted or Textured Options: Add privacy while still letting in light.

CUSTOMER
INSIGHT: “WE
ADDED A
VERTICAL
ACCENT STRIP
IN OUR
SHOWER
NICHE. IT GAVE
A CUSTOM FEEL
WITHOUT
DRIVING UP
THE BUDGET.”
-TIM T.

GROUT

Grout is often overlooked, but plays a big role in maintenance:

- Standard Grout: Classic option, but more porous and requires sealing.
- Epoxy Grout: Stain-resistant, waterproof, and long-lasting. Perfect for showers.
- Color Choice: Lighter grout blends for a seamless look; darker grout hides stains and highlights tile patterns.

PRO TIP:
INVESTING IN
EPOXY GROUT
DURING THE
INITIAL
REMODEL
SAVES TIME
AND
HEADACHES
LATER.

PULLING IT ALL TOGETHER

Your shower design comes down to a balance of beauty, function, and long-term care. By carefully choosing your tile size, layout, material, glass, and grout, you create a centerpiece that not only looks incredible but also serves your family for years to come.



CHAPTER 3

TILE LAYOUTS

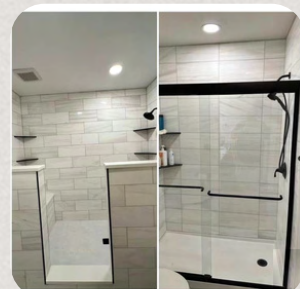
WHY LAYOUT MATTERS

Tile is one of the most versatile design elements in your remodel. Beyond the size and color, the way it's laid out transforms the entire look and feel of the space. The right pattern can make a small bathroom feel larger, highlight a focal wall, or add subtle elegance.



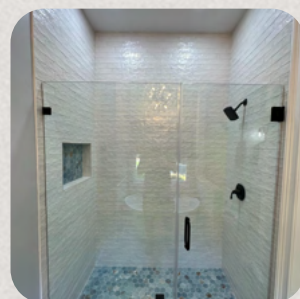
CLASSIC PATTERNS

- Straight Lay/Stacked (Grid): Tiles are set square, edge to edge. Clean, timeless, and budget-friendly. Not always an option, depending on tile.
- Brick/Offset (Running Bond): Each row is staggered like bricks. A softer, traditional look that works well with rectangular tiles.
- Diagonal: Tiles set at a 45° angle open up the space visually, making rooms appear bigger.



CLASSIC PATTERNS

- Herringbone: Rectangular tiles laid in a zig-zag pattern. Bold, eye-catching, and great for accent walls or shower niches.
- Chevron: Similar to herringbone but cut precisely for “V” shapes. High-end, modern, and striking.
- Basketweave: Mimics woven fabric using rectangular and square tiles. Adds subtle texture and interest.
- Modular/Versailles (French): A mix of different-sized tiles arranged in a repeating pattern for a classic, old-world feel.



ORIENTATION CHOICES

- Horizontal: Widens the space, making walls appear broader and ceilings lower. Great for creating a calming, grounded effect.
- Vertical: Draws the eye upward, adding height to small bathrooms. Works especially well with long rectangular tiles.
- Mixed Orientation: Combining horizontal and vertical layouts in different areas (e.g., vertical shower walls with horizontal floors) can create contrast and flow.

ACCENT OPPORTUNITIES

- Layout isn't just for the main surfaces — you can use patterns strategically:
- Feature Wall: An accent wall in herringbone or chevron makes a bold statement.
- Shower Niche: Contrasting layouts in niches highlight the space without overwhelming the design.
- Borders or Bands: A single strip of decorative layout breaks up large expanses of tile.

BALANCING STYLE & BUDGET

- While intricate patterns look stunning, they often require more material cuts and labor time. A smart approach is to use complex layouts sparingly — in small, high-impact areas — while keeping main walls or floors in a simpler pattern.

FINAL THOUGHTS

- Tile layout is where design meets personality. Whether you choose a simple grid or a bold chevron, the orientation and pattern you select will influence the entire mood of your bathroom. With the right combination, your tile can be both practical and a true expression of your style.

PRO TIP: A STRAIGHT-LAY PATTERN WITH A SINGLE HERRINGBONE ACCENT WALL DELIVERS A DESIGNER LOOK WITHOUT THE DESIGNER PRICE TAG.

CHAPTER 4

TILE MATERIALS

WHY MATERIAL MATTERS

The type of tile you choose isn't just about looks — it affects durability, maintenance, and cost. Selecting the right material helps you balance budget with performance and ensures your remodel stands the test of time.

PORCELAIN

Strength & Style in One

- Extremely dense and less porous than ceramic, making it highly resistant to water and stains.
- Ideal for showers, floors, and high-traffic areas.
- Comes in countless styles — from sleek modern looks to porcelain that mimics natural stone or wood.

Pros: Durable, water-resistant, low-maintenance, versatile designs.

Cons: Slightly higher cost than ceramic, can be harder to cut (more labor-intensive).

CERAMIC

Affordable & Reliable

- Lighter and easier to cut than porcelain, which makes installation more budget-friendly.
- Excellent choice for walls and light-use areas.
- Wide range of colors, patterns, and glazes allow for endless customization.

Pros: Cost-effective, versatile, easier to install, wide variety of looks.

Cons: Slightly more porous than porcelain, may chip or wear faster in high-traffic zones.

PRO TIP: A STRAIGHT-LAY PATTERN WITH A SINGLE HERRINGBONE ACCENT WALL DELIVERS A DESIGNER LOOK WITHOUT THE DESIGNER PRICE TAG.

NATURAL STONE

Luxury with a Timeless Touch

- Materials like marble, travertine, granite, or slate create a one-of-a-kind look.
- Adds texture, richness, and natural beauty that can't be replicated.
- Requires sealing and ongoing maintenance to protect against water and staining.

Pros: Unique, luxurious appearance, high resale appeal.

Cons: Higher cost, more upkeep, and each piece is naturally varied (which some love, others don't).

CHOOSING THE RIGHT MATERIAL

- Best All-Around: Porcelain offers the perfect mix of durability and style.
- Budget-Friendly Choice: Ceramic keeps costs in check while still providing great looks.
- Luxury Statement: Natural stone delivers unmatched beauty if you're willing to invest in maintenance.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Tile material is one of the foundational decisions in your remodel. Think about where the tile will be used, how much maintenance you're comfortable with, and the overall style you want to achieve. With the right choice, you'll have a surface that looks incredible and performs beautifully for years to come.

CUSTOMER
INSIGHT: "WE
CHOSE
PORCELAIN
BECAUSE IT
GAVE US THE
DURABILITY WE
NEEDED FOR
OUR FAMILY,
BUT IT STILL
LOOKED LIKE
NATURAL
STONE. IT WAS
THE PERFECT
BALANCE."

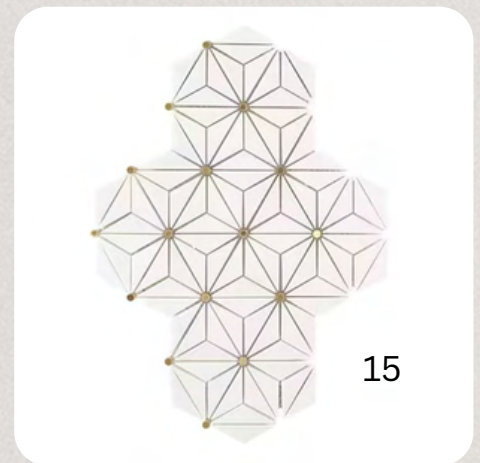
CERAMIC



PORCELAIN



MARBLE



CHAPTER 5

GROUT

WHY GROUT MATTERS

Grout often feels like a finishing detail, but it plays a huge role in the performance and appearance of your remodel. The right grout choice can mean the difference between a shower that stays clean and beautiful for years — or one that becomes a constant maintenance headache.

TRADITIONAL GROUT

The Classic Option

- Made of cement, sand, and water.
- Available in sanded or unsanded varieties depending on tile spacing.
- Requires sealing to protect against moisture and stains.

Pros:

- Widely available and affordable.
- Easy to install and repair.
- Wide range of color options.

Cons:

- Porous — can absorb water and stains.
- Requires regular sealing.
- More prone to cracking and discoloration over time.

PRO TIP: MOST GROUTS COME WITH A SEALER BUILT IN. IT WILL NEED RESEALED BUT NOT AN INITIAL COAT.

EPOXY GROUT

The Modern Upgrade

- Made with resin and hardeners for maximum durability.
- Naturally waterproof and stain-resistant.
- Excellent choice for showers, floors, and high-moisture areas.

Pros:

- Extremely durable — resists cracks, stains, and chemicals.
- Never needs sealing.
- Maintains its color and finish for years.

Cons:

- Higher material and installation cost.
- More challenging to work with (requires skilled installers).

PRO TIP: IF YOU'RE INVESTING IN A NEW SHOWER, EPOXY GROUT OFTEN PAYS FOR ITSELF IN THE LONG RUN BY ELIMINATING RESEALING AND REDUCING MAINTENANCE.

DON'T FORGET SILICONE AT CHANGE OF PLANES

- Even with the best grout, there's one place it should never be used — at change of planes (where walls meet floors, walls meet ceilings, or in corners). Because grout is rigid, natural expansion and contraction in these areas almost always causes cracking.
- The Tile Council of North America (TCNA) recommends using a flexible sealant — such as 100% silicone — in these joints to absorb movement and prevent failure. According to Mapei, “all perimeters, corners, and changes of plane in tiled surfaces must be filled with a flexible sealant instead of grout to accommodate movement and avoid cracks.”

PRO TIP: USING COLOR-MATCHED SILICONE IN CORNERS AND CHANGES OF PLANE IS ONE OF THE SIMPLEST WAYS TO PROTECT YOUR INVESTMENT AND KEEP YOUR BATHROOM LOOKING FLAWLESS.

BENEFITS OF SILICONE IN BATHROOMS

- Flexibility: Handles structural movement and prevents cracking.
- Waterproofing: Creates a watertight seal in the most vulnerable areas.
- Longevity: Reduces maintenance and extends the life of the grout system.
- Aesthetic Match: Many manufacturers (Laticrete, Mapei, Custom Building Products) offer silicone that can be color-matched to grout, so the transition looks seamless.

WHICH GROUT IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

- Budget-Friendly Projects: Traditional grout works well for light-use areas and offers lots of color flexibility.
- High-Moisture or High-Use Areas: Epoxy grout is the clear winner for showers, floors, and bathrooms that see daily traffic.
- Long-Term Value: While epoxy costs more up front, it can save money on resealing, repairs, and cleaning over time.



COMPLEMENTARY VS. CONTRASTING GROUT

The color of your grout can dramatically change the finished look of your tile:

- **Complementary (Matching) Grout:** Blends with the tile color to create a seamless, uniform appearance. Great for a calm, minimalist style where the tile itself is the star.
- **Contrasting Grout:** Uses a darker or lighter shade to highlight the grout joints, making each tile stand out more. This creates a bold, graphic look that works beautifully with subway tile, geometric patterns, and mosaics.

⚠ **Important Consideration:** Contrasting grout leaves no room for error — every grout line becomes more visible. If tiles aren't perfectly aligned or grout lines vary in thickness, it will show. That's why a skilled installer is critical when going for this high-definition style.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Grout may not be the star of your remodel, but it's the detail that keeps everything together — literally. By choosing the right grout and using silicone at changes of plane, you'll ensure your new bathroom not only looks great but performs beautifully for years to come.



CHAPTER 6

SHOWER GLASS & DOORS

WHY GLASS MATTERS

The glass you choose for your shower isn't just a finishing detail — it defines how open, modern, and inviting your bathroom feels. Glass choice impacts style, maintenance, and budget, making it one of the “big decisions” that shapes your remodel.

FRAMELESS SHOWER GLASS

Sleek & Modern

Frameless showers are built with thick, heavy glass panels (usually $\frac{3}{8}$ " to $\frac{1}{2}$ ") that require minimal hardware for support. They showcase tile work beautifully and create an open, airy look.

Pros:

- Clean, high-end appearance.
- Maximizes visibility of tile and fixtures.
- Easier to keep clean with fewer metal edges for soap scum to collect.
- Adds resale value as a premium bathroom feature.

Cons:

- Higher cost due to thicker glass and precision installation.
- May require additional structural support depending on layout.

FRAMED SHOWER GLASS

Classic & Cost-Effective

Framed doors use thinner glass supported by a full metal frame. While not as sleek, today's designs offer a range of finishes and styles to suit many bathrooms.

Pros:

- Budget-friendly compared to frameless.
- Durable and structurally supported by the frame.
- Wide range of metal finishes available (brushed nickel, chrome, matte black).

Cons:

- Heavier visual presence compared to frameless.
- Metal tracks and edges can collect water and soap residue.
- Less "luxury appeal" than frameless.

SEMI-FRAMELESS & SLIDING OPTIONS

For homeowners wanting something in-between, semi-frameless showers provide a balance of sleek style with partial framing. Sliding doors (bypass style) work well in bathrooms with limited space, while pivot doors offer a wider entry in larger layouts.

PRIVACY OPTIONS

Glass doesn't have to be clear. Many homeowners choose textured, frosted, or patterned glass for added privacy while still letting in natural light. This does make that bathroom seem smaller in some cases.

CHOOSING WHAT'S RIGHT FOR YOU

- High-End Look, Maximum Openness: Frameless glass.
- Budget-Friendly & Durable: Framed glass.
- Balanced Choice: Semi-frameless or sliding doors.
- Privacy Priority: Frosted or textured glass.

PRO TIP:
FRAMELESS
GLASS REQUIRES
PRECISE
INSTALLATION —
MAKE SURE
YOUR TILE
WALLS ARE
PLUMB AND
SQUARE, OR YOU
MAY RUN INTO
FIT ISSUES. A
SKILLED
INSTALLER IS KEY.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Shower glass may seem like a small detail, but it plays a huge role in both style and functionality. Whether you choose the sleek openness of frameless or the durability and value of framed, the right glass ensures your shower feels like the centerpiece of your new bathroom.



FRAMELESS



SEMI-FRAMELESS



FRAMED



CHAPTER 7

NICHES & SHELVING

WHY STORAGE MATTERS IN SHOWERS

One of the biggest frustrations homeowners share about older bathrooms is lack of storage. Shampoo bottles on the floor or razor hooks on the wall not only look cluttered but also make daily routines less enjoyable. That's where niches and shelving come in — blending function with style while keeping your shower organized and polished.

BUILT-IN NICHES

Custom Storage with a Designer Touch

- Recessed directly into the wall between studs.
- Provides a sleek, built-in look with no extra hardware.
- Can be tiled to match the shower or accented with decorative tile for a focal point.

Pros:

- Clean, integrated appearance.
- Flexible design — vertical, horizontal, double niches.
- Adds visual interest when paired with accent tile.

Cons:

- Requires planning during construction (walls must be opened).
- Location limited by plumbing and framing.

PRO TIP: PLACE NICHES AT EYE OR CHEST HEIGHT FOR EASY ACCESS — AND AVOID EXTERIOR WALLS IF POSSIBLE, TO REDUCE INSULATION CHALLENGES.

CORNER SHELVES

Simple & Space-Saving

- Installed directly into the corner of the shower.
- Available in porcelain, stone, or glass.
- Great for smaller bathrooms or as supplemental storage.

Pros:

- Affordable and easy to install.
- Doesn't require wall framing adjustments.
- Can add multiple shelves without overwhelming the space.

Cons:

- Less storage capacity than a niche.
- More visible than recessed options.

FLOATING OR GLASS SHELVES

Lightweight & Modern

- Mounted onto walls with hidden or minimal brackets.
- Often made of tempered glass for a modern, airy look.

Pros:

- Minimal visual footprint.
- Easy to clean and maintain.
- Perfect for pairing with sleek frameless glass showers.

Cons:

- Limited weight capacity.
- Works better for secondary storage or decorative items.



BALANCING FUNCTION & STYLE

- When designing shelving and niches, think about:
- Daily Use: How many bottles and products do you use regularly?
- Style Impact: Do you want your storage to blend in or stand out as a feature?
- Maintenance: Niches with sloped bottoms drain better, while corner shelves should be sealed properly to avoid leaks.

NICHE & SHELF PLACEMENT GUIDE

- When designing niches and shelving, placement is everything. The right height and position makes daily use effortless while preventing water pooling.
- Recommended Heights:
- Shower Niches: 36–48 inches from the floor (chest to shoulder height for most adults).
- Shaving Niches (footrests): 12–18 inches from the floor for easy leg support.
- Corner Shelves: 42–48 inches from the floor for bottles, or staggered at multiple heights for more storage.
- Placement Tips:
- Keep niches on interior walls when possible to avoid insulation issues.
- Ensure bottoms are sloped slightly for water drainage.
- For double niches, align them vertically for a clean, modern look.
- Match shelf material to your tile for seamless style — or contrast for a bold feature.

CUSTOMER
INSIGHT:
“ADDING TWO
NICHES — ONE
FOR BOTTLES
AND ONE FOR
RAZORS — MADE
OUR SHOWER
FEEL
CUSTOMIZED TO
HOW WE
ACTUALLY USE
IT.”

FINAL THOUGHTS

Smart storage transforms a shower from cluttered to comfortable. Whether you go for a sleek built-in niche, functional corner shelves, or modern floating options, the right choice adds both convenience and style to your bathroom remodel.

CHAPTER 8

VANITIES

WHY THE VANITY MATTERS

The vanity is more than just a sink and cabinet — it's the anchor of your bathroom design. It sets the tone for style, provides critical storage, and influences how functional your space feels day to day. Choosing the right vanity is one of the most important decisions in your remodel.

FLOATING VANITIES

Modern & Space-Saving

- Mounted to the wall with open space underneath.
- Creates the illusion of more floor space, making bathrooms feel larger.
- Works beautifully in modern, minimalist, or spa-style designs.

Pros:

- Sleek, contemporary look.
- Easier to clean the floor underneath.
- Great for small or narrow bathrooms.

Cons:

- Less storage capacity than full cabinetry.
- Requires solid wall support for installation.

PRO TIP: PAIR A FLOATING VANITY WITH UNDER-CABINET LIGHTING FOR A DRAMATIC, HIGH-END LOOK.

CUSTOM VANITIES

Tailored to Fit Your Space

- Designed to match your exact size, layout, and style preferences.
- Can be built to maximize tricky layouts or incorporate unique features.
- Endless material and finish options for a one-of-a-kind piece.

Pros:

- Perfect fit, no wasted space.
- Total design flexibility.
- Adds a truly custom, high-end feel to the remodel.

Cons:

- Higher cost compared to stock or semi-custom options.
- Longer lead times for fabrication.

DOUBLE VANITIES

Function Meets Convenience

- Two sinks side by side in one shared unit.
- Ideal for master bathrooms and shared spaces.
- Helps reduce morning congestion and gives couples or families their own space.

Pros:

- Highly functional for multiple users.
- Often comes with added countertop space.
- Strong resale appeal in larger homes.

Cons:

- Requires a larger bathroom footprint.
- Additional plumbing and fixtures increase cost.



PREFAB VANITIES FROM BIG BOX STORES

Affordable & Accessible

- Ready-made vanities available at home improvement retailers.
- Typically come as all-in-one units with sink, countertop, and base included.
- Standard sizes and finishes make them a quick, budget-friendly solution.

Pros:

- Cost-effective and easy to purchase.
- Quick installation with little customization needed.
- Great for guest bathrooms or secondary spaces.

Cons:

- Limited styles, sizes, and quality compared to custom options.
- Materials may not be as durable as higher-end cabinetry.
- May not maximize space in unique layouts.

PRO TIP: PREFAB VANITIES ARE PERFECT FOR SMALL BATHROOMS OR BUDGET-CONSCIOUS PROJECTS — BUT IN A PRIMARY BATHROOM, INVESTING IN CUSTOM OR SEMI-CUSTOM OFTEN PAYS OFF IN DURABILITY AND DESIGN.

BALANCING FORM & FUNCTION

When selecting your vanity, consider:

- Space: Does your bathroom layout support a double or floating option?
- Storage Needs: Do you need drawers, shelves, or cabinets for everyday items?
- Budget: Is a prefab solution good enough, or does your main bath deserve a long-term custom piece?
- Style Impact: Do you want the vanity to blend in or be the focal point of your design?

FINAL THOUGHTS

The right vanity brings together function, storage, and style in one centerpiece. Whether you choose the sleekness of a floating design, the customization of a tailor-made piece, the practicality of a double vanity, or the affordability of a prefab solution, your choice should reflect both your daily routine and your dream bathroom aesthetic.

CHAPTER 9

COUNTERTOPS & SINKS

WHY COUNTERTOPS & SINKS MATTER

Your countertop and sink aren't just functional — they're daily touchpoints that influence how your bathroom looks, feels, and performs. From makeup prep to washing up, these choices affect durability, maintenance, and style for years to come.

COUNTERTOP MATERIALS

Quartz

The Best All-Around Choice

Engineered from natural stone and resins, quartz is non-porous, durable, and available in a wide variety of styles. It delivers the elegance of stone with far less upkeep.

Pros:

- Extremely durable and resistant to scratches, chips, and stains.
- Non-porous — resists bacteria and never needs sealing.
- Huge selection of colors and veining patterns, many mimicking natural stone.
- Long-term value and strong resale appeal.

Cons:

- Slightly higher initial cost compared to lower-end granite.
- Heavy, requiring professional installation.

PRO TIP: QUARTZ COMBINES THE BEAUTY OF NATURAL STONE WITH THE PEACE OF MIND OF LOW MAINTENANCE — THE IDEAL BALANCE FOR MOST HOMEOWNERS.

CULTURED MARBLE

Budget-Friendly & Manufactured

Cultured marble is a man-made product created by combining crushed stone with resin and a gel coating. It's designed to mimic natural marble at a lower price point, often used in prefab vanity tops.

Pros:

- Affordable compared to quartz or granite.
- Seamless options often include integrated sinks.
- Smooth, consistent look.

Cons:

- Less durable — prone to scratches and chips.
- Can yellow or dull over time.
- Lacks the natural variation and luxury appeal of real stone.

GRANITE

Natural Strength

Granite is durable and comes in a wide range of natural colors and patterns. It offers great strength but needs sealing to stay protected.

Pros:

- Durable and heat-resistant.
- Distinct natural variations for a unique look.
- More affordable than quartz in some cases.

Cons:

- Porous — requires sealing to prevent stains.
- Variations in pattern may make slab matching difficult.

SINK OPTIONS

Undermount Sinks

Clean & Seamless

Installed beneath the countertop, undermount sinks offer a sleek appearance and make cleaning simple.

Pros:

- Easy to wipe water directly into the sink.
- Sleek, modern design.
- Works perfectly with quartz, granite, or cultured marble tops.

Cons:

- Slightly more expensive installation than drop-ins.
- Requires solid-surface countertops.

VESSEL (BOWL) SINKS

Stylish & Statement-Making

Mounted on top of the countertop, vessel sinks (or bowl sinks) serve as a design focal point. They come in glass, stone, ceramic, and other materials.

Pros:

- Bold, eye-catching centerpiece.
- Wide range of shapes, sizes, and materials.
- Can add height and character to standard vanities.

Cons:

- Can splash more easily than undermounts.
- Requires more careful cleaning around the base.
- Less storage space under the counter due to higher plumbing.

CHOOSING WHAT'S RIGHT FOR YOU

- Best Overall Combo: Quartz countertop with an undermount sink — durable, stylish, and low-maintenance.
- Budget-Friendly Solution: Cultured marble with an integrated or bowl sink — affordable and functional, but less durable long-term.
- Natural & Practical: Granite with an undermount sink — strong, timeless, and classic.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Countertops and sinks shape both the look and the function of your bathroom. While cultured marble and granite each have their place, quartz stands out as the best long-term choice for homeowners who want elegance without the maintenance. Pair it with a sleek undermount sink for a combination that delivers both daily convenience and lasting value.



CHAPTER 10

FLOORING

WHY FLOORING CHOICES MATTER

Bathroom flooring needs to do it all — resist water, handle daily wear, and tie the design together. The right choice balances durability, maintenance, and style. Two of the most popular bathroom options today are tile and luxury vinyl plank (LVP).

TILE FLOORING

Classic & Durable

Tile has long been the standard for bathroom floors. Available in ceramic, porcelain, and natural stone, it offers timeless style and lasting performance.

Pros:

- Extremely durable and long-lasting.
- Waterproof when properly installed and sealed.
- Endless design possibilities (sizes, patterns, and textures).
- Pairs beautifully with heated floor systems.

Cons:

- Cold and hard underfoot without radiant heating.
- Can be slippery if not textured.
- Higher labor cost due to prep and installation.

PRO TIP:
PORCELAIN TILE
IS THE MOST
POPULAR
CHOICE FOR
BATHROOMS —
IT'S DENSE,
WATERPROOF,
AND AVAILABLE
IN STYLES THAT
MIMIC WOOD,
STONE, OR EVEN
CONCRETE.

WHY USE AN UNCOUPLING MEMBRANE WITH TILE FLOORS?

An uncoupling membrane (like Schluter®-DITRA or similar products) is a thin layer installed between the subfloor and the tile. Its job is to absorb movement in the floor and prevent cracks in the tile and grout.

Benefits:

- Crack Prevention: Protects tile and grout from subfloor movement and settling.
- Moisture Control: Many membranes are waterproof, adding extra protection in bathrooms.
- Longevity: Extends the life of your tile installation by reducing stress from expansion, contraction, or shifting.
- Flexibility: Helps bridge small imperfections in the subfloor.

LUXURY VINYL PLANK (LVP)

Modern & Versatile

LVP is a synthetic flooring designed to look like wood or stone while being highly resistant to water. It's a floating or glue-down floor system that's warmer underfoot than tile.

Pros:

- 100% waterproof in most products.
- Softer and warmer underfoot compared to tile.
- More affordable installation.
- Wide variety of realistic wood and stone looks.

Cons:

- Can scratch or dent from sharp objects.
- May not match the resale value of tile.
- Requires perfectly flat subfloors for best performance.

PRO TIP: AN UNCOUPLING MEMBRANE IS A SMALL UPFRONT INVESTMENT THAT PAYS FOR ITSELF BY PROTECTING YOUR TILE FROM CRACKING LONG-TERM. IT'S ONE OF THE BIGGEST DIFFERENCES BETWEEN A QUICK INSTALL AND A PROFESSIONAL ONE BUILT TO LAST.

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LUXURY VINYL TILE (LVT)

A Subcategory of LVP

LVT falls under the LVP family but is cut into tile-shaped pieces instead of planks. It mimics natural tile while offering the comfort and warmth of vinyl.

Pros:

- Easier installation compared to real tile.
- Same waterproof properties as LVP.
- Can be installed with or without grout lines for different looks.

Cons:

- Still not as durable or high-end as real tile.
- Heat resistance is lower than porcelain.

WATERPROOF LAMINATE

An Alternative — But Not Ideal

Waterproof laminate is sometimes marketed as a bathroom option. While it's more resistant to water than traditional laminate, it still isn't the best choice for high-moisture spaces like bathrooms.

Why Not?

- Water can seep into seams and cause swelling.
- Better suited for kitchens or living areas.
- Most manufacturers don't recommend it for full bathrooms.



CHOOSING WHAT'S RIGHT FOR YOU

- Best Long-Term Choice: Tile with an uncoupling membrane — durable, waterproof, and built to last.
- Comfort & Easy Install: LVP — waterproof and warmer underfoot.
- Tile-Look Alternative: LVT — mimics tile with vinyl comfort.
- Avoid for Bathrooms: Waterproof laminate — not reliable in constant moisture.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Your flooring sets the stage for your bathroom remodel. While tile remains the gold standard for durability and value, luxury vinyl plank and tile offer excellent comfort and design flexibility. Adding an uncoupling membrane under tile ensures your investment is protected for the long haul. By weighing your priorities — whether it's timeless style or everyday practicality — you'll find a flooring option that fits your lifestyle and budget.



HEXAGON TILE



12X12 TILE



LVP



LVT

CHAPTER 11

LIGHTING & MIRRORS

WHY LIGHTING & MIRRORS MATTER

Lighting and mirrors are often treated as finishing touches, but they play a major role in how functional and stylish your bathroom feels. The right combination can make a small space feel bigger, highlight design details, and improve your daily routine.

VANITY LIGHTING

Task Lighting Where You Need It Most

Vanity lights are essential for shaving, makeup, and grooming. Poor placement can cast shadows, while proper lighting ensures clarity and comfort.

Options:

- Sconces (Side Lighting): Placed on either side of the mirror for even illumination.
- Overhead Vanity Bars: Mounted above the mirror, effective for smaller spaces.
- Integrated LED Mirrors: Mirrors with built-in lighting for a sleek, modern look.

PRO TIP: MOUNT WALL SCONCES AT EYE LEVEL (AROUND 65-70 INCHES FROM THE FLOOR) FOR THE MOST FLATTERING LIGHT. VANITY LIGHTS ARE MOUNTED AT 75-80 INCHES FROM THE FLOOR.

AMBIENT LIGHTING

Set the Mood

General lighting fills the entire space and sets the overall tone.

- Recessed Ceiling Lights: Provide clean, widespread illumination.
- Flush or Semi-Flush Fixtures: Add design flair while brightening the room.
- Dimmable LEDs: Allow you to shift from bright morning prep to soft evening relaxation.

ACCENT & SPECIALTY LIGHTING

Highlight Design Details

Accent lighting adds drama and style, turning your bathroom into a retreat.

- Under-Cabinet or Toe-Kick Lighting: Creates a floating effect with vanities.
- Niche & Shelf Lighting: Showcases decorative tile or products.
- Chandeliers or Pendants: Luxurious focal points in larger bathrooms.

MIRRORS

Form Meets Function

Mirrors do more than reflect — they expand the space and define the design.

Options:

- Framed Mirrors: Add warmth and style, matching cabinetry or finishes.
- Frameless Mirrors: Sleek and modern, perfect for minimalist looks.
- LED or Backlit Mirrors: Built-in lighting reduces shadows and adds elegance. Many models also feature anti-fog technology, keeping your mirror clear after hot showers so you can get ready without delay.
- Medicine Cabinet Mirrors: Combine storage with functionality.

PRO TIP: LED MIRRORS WITH DEFOGGING ARE PERFECT FOR MASTER BATHS — NO MORE WIPING DOWN A CLOUDY MIRROR WHEN YOU'RE IN A RUSH.

CHOOSING WHAT'S RIGHT FOR YOU

- Daily Function: Pair task lighting with an LED or side-lit mirror for the best visibility.
- Style Statement: Use decorative mirrors or bold lighting fixtures to anchor the design.
- Luxury Feel: Layer ambient, task, and accent lighting to create a spa-like atmosphere.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Lighting and mirrors are the finishing details that elevate your bathroom from functional to exceptional. Whether it's task lighting for clarity, ambient lighting for comfort, or a statement mirror with anti-fog LED technology, these elements are the key to creating a bathroom that looks beautiful and works flawlessly every day.



CHAPTER 12

FIXTURES & FINISHES

WHY FIXTURES & FINISHES MATTER

Fixtures may seem like small details, but they have a big impact on both the style and function of your bathroom. From the faucet you use every morning to the shower head that sets the tone for your day, these finishing touches define your experience and bring the design together.

FINISH OPTIONS

Your choice of finish determines not only the look but also how fixtures hold up over time.

Popular Finishes:

- Polished Chrome: Classic, reflective, and easy to clean. Timeless in any style.
- Brushed Nickel: Soft, matte look that resists fingerprints and water spots.
- Matte Black: Modern and bold, adds strong contrast to light tile and vanities.
- Oil-Rubbed Bronze: Warm, traditional finish with vintage charm.
- Gold/Brass (Brushed or Polished): Luxurious, trendy, and eye-catching.

PRO TIP: MIX FINISHES CAREFULLY. FOR EXAMPLE, MATTE BLACK FAUCETS WITH BRUSHED NICKEL SHOWER HARDWARE CAN FEEL DISJOINTED. CONSISTENCY CREATES A POLISHED, INTENTIONAL DESIGN.

SQUARED DESIGNS VS. ROUNDED EDGES

Beyond finish, the shape of your fixtures makes a huge impact on the overall style of your bathroom.

- **Squared Fixtures:** Sharp lines, right angles, and geometric styling. Perfect for modern, minimalist, and contemporary designs. Works best with rectangular sinks, flat cabinet fronts, and clean tile patterns.
- **Rounded Fixtures:** Softer curves, circular edges, and organic forms. Ideal for traditional or transitional styles, bringing warmth and comfort to the space. Works well with oval mirrors, arched lighting, and softer tile layouts.

⚠ **Design Tip:** Try to keep fixture geometry consistent throughout the bathroom. Mixing rounded faucets with squared shower heads or hardware can feel disjointed. A cohesive shape theme creates harmony and flow.

SINK FAUCETS

Everyday Function Meets Style

Mounting Styles:

- **Centerset:** Compact, with spout and handles on one base — ideal for small vanities.
- **Widespread:** Separate handles and spout — more upscale and customizable.
- **Single Handle:** Simple, space-saving, and modern.
- **Wall-Mounted:** Mounted above the sink, freeing counter space and making cleaning easier.

Design Styles:

- **Modern:** Sleek lines, minimal design, often with squared edges.
- **Traditional:** Curved spouts and detailed handles.
- **Transitional:** Blends modern and classic elements for broad appeal.

SHOWER HEADS

The Heart of Your Shower Experience

Types:

- Fixed Wall-Mount: Classic and reliable, available in all finishes.
- Handheld: Adds flexibility for rinsing, cleaning, or accessibility needs.
- Rainfall: Mounted overhead for a spa-like experience.
- Dual Systems: Combines fixed and handheld, offering versatility.
- Body Sprays: Added jets that deliver a luxury, full-body shower.

Features to Consider:

- Water Efficiency: Look for WaterSense-labeled fixtures to save water without sacrificing performance.
- Pressure & Spray Settings: Adjustable sprays (massage, mist, rainfall) allow customization.
- Thermostatic Controls: Maintain consistent temperature and prevent sudden changes.

PULLING IT ALL TOGETHER

Fixtures and finishes should be chosen with both style consistency and daily comfort in mind. A cohesive finish ties the bathroom together, while keeping fixture geometry consistent (squared or rounded) creates a unified design theme. Combine these choices with the right faucet and shower head to improve your everyday routine.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Fixtures and finishes are the jewelry of your bathroom remodel. Whether you want bold matte black statements, timeless chrome, or luxurious brushed gold — and whether you lean squared or rounded — keeping your choices consistent ensures your bathroom feels as good as it looks.

CUSTOMER
INSIGHT:
“SWITCHING TO
A RAINFALL
SHOWER HEAD
AND BRUSHED
NICKEL FAUCETS
COMPLETELY
TRANSFORMED
HOW OUR
BATHROOM
FEELS — LIKE A
SPA EVERY DAY.”

CHAPTER 13

SHOWER VALVES

WHY SHOWER VALVES DESERVE ATTENTION

Though hidden behind the wall, the shower valve is the control center of your shower. It manages water flow and temperature, and it also dictates which fixtures you can use. Choosing the right valve — and making sure it's compatible with your trim and shower system — ensures everything works seamlessly.

BRAND COMPATIBILITY

Most shower valves are brand-specific or require compatibility with certain trim kits. While some universal valves exist, they often have limitations.

- **Easiest Approach:** Choose the same brand valve as the shower trim kit. This guarantees a proper fit and prevents headaches down the road.
- **Why It Matters:** Mismatched brands can cause leaks, improper function, or limited replacement options if parts wear out.
- **Long-Term Benefit:** Sticking with one brand ensures that future replacement trim will fit without tearing open walls.

PRO TIP: THINK OF THE VALVE AS THE “ENGINE” AND THE TRIM KIT AS THE “DASHBOARD.” THEY NEED TO MATCH TO WORK CORRECTLY.

DIVERTER VALVES EXPLAINED

A diverter valve controls the direction of water flow when you have multiple shower features — like a handheld, rain head, or body sprays. It allows you to switch between fixtures or sometimes run more than one at the same time.

DIVERTER PLACEMENT: INTEGRATED VS. SEPARATE

Integrated Diverter

Some valves include a diverter built directly into the same housing as the main valve.

Benefits:

- Simpler Layout: One control location for temperature, pressure, and diverter.
- Cleaner Look: Fewer handles and trim pieces on the wall.
- Cost-Efficient: Fewer valves to purchase and install.

Drawbacks:

- Limited flexibility — often only supports 2–3 outputs.
- All controls are clustered in one spot, which can be less convenient for large showers.

Separate Diverter Valve

A diverter can also be installed as its own dedicated valve in a different location in the shower.

Benefits:

- Convenience: Place diverter closer to the shower entrance, so you can switch water flow before stepping in.
- Flexibility: Supports more shower outlets or custom configurations.
- Premium Feel: Offers a more tailored, spa-like control setup.

Drawbacks:

- More hardware and plumbing = higher cost.
- Additional trim on the wall, which may affect aesthetics.



TYPES OF SHOWER VALVES

Pressure-Balancing Valves

Safety & Simplicity

- Designed to keep water temperature steady even if pressure suddenly changes (like when someone flushes a toilet).
- Balances hot and cold water automatically to reduce scalding risk.

Pros:

- Affordable and widely available.
- Meets plumbing code in most areas.
- Great for family bathrooms where safety is key.

Cons:

- Only maintains temperature balance — water pressure may still fluctuate.
- Less precise temperature control compared to thermostatic valves.

Thermostatic Valves

Luxury & Precision

- Lets you set and maintain an exact water temperature.
- Often used in custom showers with multiple outlets (rain head, handheld, body sprays).

Pros:

- Keeps water temperature consistent no matter what.
- Allows multiple fixtures to run at the same time (with proper flow rates).
- Premium feel — spa-like experience every day.

Cons:

- Higher initial cost and more complex installation.
- Typically requires more space behind the wall.

PULLING IT ALL TOGETHER

- When designing your shower, the valve choice is just as important as tile or fixtures. By choosing a brand-compatible valve, you simplify installation and future maintenance. Adding a diverter valve — either integrated with the main valve for a streamlined look, or separate for more flexibility — gives you full control over your shower experience.

FINAL THOUGHTS

- Shower valves may be hidden, but they determine how your shower functions every single day. Stick with a matching brand, and decide early whether an integrated or separate diverter makes the most sense for your layout. The right choice will provide years of reliable performance and convenience.



CHAPTER 14

ACCESSORIES & SAFETY

WHY ACCESSORIES & SAFETY MATTER

The right accessories and safety features are the finishing touches that make a bathroom not only beautiful but also comfortable and functional for years to come. From towel bars to grab bars, these details often go unnoticed until you need them — but when planned correctly, they elevate both style and peace of mind.

EVERYDAY ACCESSORIES

Accessories complete the look of your bathroom while adding convenience to your routine.

Popular Options:

- Towel Bars & Rings: Keep towels within reach, available in all finishes to match fixtures.
- Robe Hooks: Simple space-savers that add comfort after showers.
- Toilet Paper Holders: From classic wall-mounted to modern recessed options.
- Shelving & Storage: Floating shelves, baskets, or built-ins to keep essentials organized.
- Shower Caddies: Wall-mounted or recessed to prevent clutter on shower floors.

PRO TIP: MATCH ACCESSORIES TO YOUR FIXTURE FINISH (CHROME, NICKEL, MATTE BLACK, BRASS) TO CREATE A CONSISTENT, DESIGNER LOOK.

SAFETY ACCESSORIES

Bathrooms are one of the most common areas for slips and falls. Adding subtle safety features ensures your remodel stays safe for the entire family — without sacrificing style.

Key Features:

- **Grab Bars:** Installed near showers, tubs, and toilets for added support. Available in stylish finishes that blend with your hardware.
- **Slip-Resistant Flooring:** Textured tile or slip-resistant vinyl reduces fall risk.
- **Shower Benches:** Built-in or fold-down benches add convenience and comfort, especially for aging-in-place designs.
- **Handheld Showers:** Double as a functional upgrade and accessibility aid.

BENCH OPTIONS

Shower benches provide both comfort and safety. Depending on your needs, there are several types to consider:

- **Framed-In & Tiled Benches:**
 - Built into the shower during construction.
 - Fully tiled to match or accent the shower walls.
 - Permanent and sturdy, often used in master bathrooms.
 - Best for: Long-term use, luxury look, resale value.
- **Folding Benches:**
 - Wall-mounted and can be folded up when not in use.
 - Available in wood, teak, or composite materials.
 - Great for saving space in smaller showers.
 - Best for: Bathrooms where accessibility is important but space is limited.
- **Removable/Portable Benches:**
 - Freestanding benches that can be moved in and out of the shower.
 - Often lightweight and easy to clean.
 - No permanent installation required.
 - Best for: Temporary needs, renters, or budget-friendly flexibility.

PRO TIP: IF YOU'RE PLANNING FOR AGING-IN-PLACE, EVEN IF YOU DON'T ADD A BENCH NOW, REINFORCE THE SHOWER WALL DURING CONSTRUCTION SO A FOLDING BENCH CAN BE INSTALLED LATER WITHOUT COSTLY REMODEL WORK.

AGING-IN-PLACE & UNIVERSAL DESIGN

Even if you don't need safety features today, planning for the future can save time and cost later. Many homeowners now choose to "future-proof" their bathrooms with universal design elements.

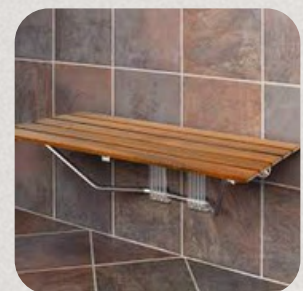
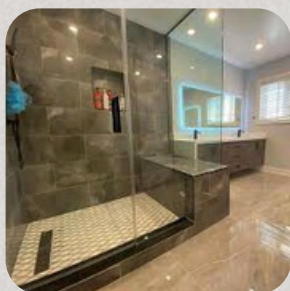
- Zero-entry (curbless) showers for easy access.
- Reinforced walls behind tile to allow grab bar installation later.
- Wider doorways and open layouts for wheelchair or walker access.
- Comfort-height toilets for easier use.

BALANCING STYLE & SAFETY

Safety features no longer have to look institutional. Manufacturers now design sleek, modern grab bars, benches, and fixtures that look like intentional design choices. With thoughtful planning, accessories can add convenience and safety while enhancing the style of your remodel.

FINAL THOUGHTS

The right vanity brings together function, storage, and style in one centerpiece. Whether you choose the sleekness of a floating design, the customization of a tailor-made piece, the practicality of a double vanity, or the affordability of a prefab solution, your choice should reflect both your daily routine and your dream bathroom aesthetic.



CHAPTER 15

TOILETS

WHY TOILETS MATTER

Why Toilets Matter

When planning a remodel, toilets may not feel like the most exciting feature — but they're one of the most used and important fixtures in your bathroom. The right toilet can improve comfort, hygiene, efficiency, and even elevate the design of your space.

TOILET STYLES

Standard Floor-Mount Toilets

- The most common style, anchored to the floor with a visible tank.
- Available in round or elongated bowls.
- Wide range of price points and designs.

Pros: Affordable, simple to install, easy to service.

Cons: Tank is always visible, takes up more floor space.

Comfort-Height Toilets

- Taller seating height (17–19 inches vs. the standard 15 inches).
- Easier on the knees and hips, especially for older adults.

Pros: More comfortable for most adults.

Cons: May feel too tall for small children.

One-Piece Toilets

- Tank and bowl molded together into one seamless unit.
- Sleeker look and easier to clean.

Pros: Modern design, fewer crevices for germs.

Cons: Heavier and more expensive than two-piece models.

Wall-Hung Toilets

- Tank hidden inside the wall, with the bowl floating off the floor.
- Creates a sleek, modern look and makes cleaning the floor easier.

Pros: Saves space, very modern style.

Cons: Requires more complex plumbing and framing, higher cost.

Smart Toilets

Technology Meets Comfort

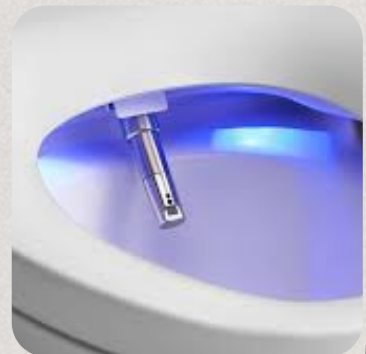
Smart toilets are becoming increasingly popular in high-end remodels. They combine luxury features with improved hygiene and convenience.

Features May Include:

- Built-in bidet functions with adjustable spray settings.
- Heated seats for comfort.
- Automatic flushing.
- Motion-activated lids that open and close hands-free.
- Nightlights for visibility in the dark.
- Air dryers and deodorizing systems.

Pros: Ultimate comfort and convenience, eco-friendly with water-saving bidet features.

Cons: Higher cost and usually require an electrical outlet nearby.



Bidets & Bidet Attachments

Bidets are no longer just European staples — they've become mainstream in American homes for both hygiene and eco-friendliness.

Options:

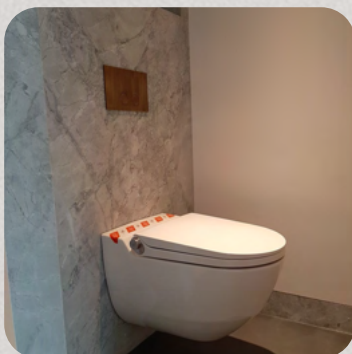
- Standalone Bidets: Separate fixture, less common in modern remodels due to space needs.
- Bidet Attachments: Affordable add-ons that fit onto existing toilets.
- Bidet Toilet Seats: Replace the toilet seat with one that includes bidet functions (heated water, adjustable spray, drying).
- Integrated Smart Toilets: Combine bidet functionality directly into the toilet design.

Benefits:

- Improved hygiene and comfort.
- Reduces toilet paper usage.
- Adds luxury feel to the bathroom.

FINAL THOUGHTS

The right vanity brings together function, storage, and style in one centerpiece. Whether you choose the sleekness of a floating design, the customization of a tailor-made piece, the practicality of a double vanity, or the affordability of a prefab solution, your choice should reflect both your daily routine and your dream bathroom aesthetic.



CHAPTER 16

WATERPROOFING

WHY WATERPROOFING MATTERS

Waterproofing is one of the most important (but least visible) parts of a bathroom remodel. It's what protects your home from leaks, mold, and costly damage behind the walls. The truth is, most waterproofing methods work well when installed correctly — but some systems are more “fool-proof” and reliable than others. Choosing the right method (and installer) makes all the difference.

WATERPROOFING METHODS

Sheet Membrane Systems

- Waterproof membranes installed over backer board before tile is set.
- Popular brands include Schluter®-KERDI and Laticrete HYDRO BAN Sheet Membrane.
- Creates a continuous barrier with seams sealed by banding or adhesives.

Pros: Reliable, long-lasting, excellent for showers.

Cons: Requires careful seam installation for full protection.

Foam Backer Boards

- Waterproof backer boards made of lightweight foam with a waterproof coating.
- Popular brands include GoBoard®, Schluter®-KERDI-Board, and Wedi® Building Panels.
- Easy to cut, lightweight, and naturally waterproof.

Pros: Fast installation, lightweight, inherently waterproof, excellent insulation.

Cons: Slightly higher material cost compared to cement board.

Liquid-Applied Membranes

- Applied like paint or roll-on coating over cement board or other substrates.
- Brands include Mapei AQUADEFENSE, Laticrete HYDRO BAN, and RedGard®.
- Flexible, seamless barrier when applied correctly.

Pros: Great for irregular surfaces or complex shapes, cost-effective.

Cons: Thickness must be applied evenly — too thin or uneven coverage can cause failure.

Traditional Cement Board with Plastic Sheeting

- The older method: cement board with a plastic or roofing felt moisture barrier behind it.
- Still used in some projects, but less common in high-end remodels today.

Pros: Inexpensive, time-tested.

Cons: More prone to failure if seams aren't perfect; doesn't offer the same surface waterproofing as modern methods.

OUR PREFERRED APPROACH

At Upstate Bath Renewal, we favor Schluter® waterproofing systems and GoBoard® backer board.

- Schluter®-KERDI: A sheet membrane system trusted industry-wide for its reliability and longevity.
- GoBoard®: Lightweight, waterproof foam backer board that installs quickly, making it one of the most efficient and fool-proof methods available.

These systems provide peace of mind that your bathroom isn't just beautiful on the surface but is protected behind the walls for years to come.

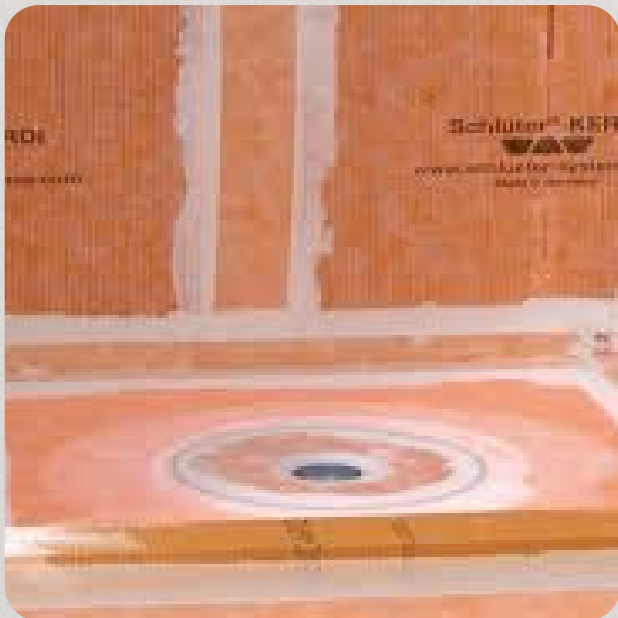
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INVESTMENT IN
QUALITY
WATERPROOFING
SAVES
THOUSANDS IN
POTENTIAL
REPAIR COSTS
LATER.

PULLING IT ALL TOGETHER

While many waterproofing methods work when installed properly, some are more forgiving and consistent than others. Sheet membranes and foam backer boards like Schluter® and GoBoard® are our preferred solutions because they offer a higher margin of safety and long-term protection.

FINAL THOUGHTS

The right vanity brings together function, storage, and style in one centerpiece. Whether you choose the sleekness of a floating design, the customization of a tailor-made piece, the practicality of a double vanity, or the affordability of a prefab solution, your choice should reflect both your daily routine and your dream bathroom aesthetic.



CHAPTER 17

CHOOSING THE RIGHT CONTRACTOR

WHY YOUR CONTRACTOR CHOICE MATTERS

The best design and materials won't matter if the installation is poor. A bathroom remodel is an investment, and the contractor you choose will determine whether it's a smooth, successful project — or a stressful one. The right contractor ensures your remodel is done right, on time, and built to last.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Licensing & Insurance

- A professional contractor should be fully licensed and insured.
- This protects both you and your home in case of accidents or damage.

Experience & Specialization

- Look for a contractor who specializes in bathrooms — not just general remodeling.
- Experience with waterproofing, plumbing, and tile installation is essential.

Reputation & Reviews

- Check online reviews, ask for references, and look at before-and-after photos.
- A reputable contractor should have a track record of satisfied clients.

Clear Communication

- The best contractors explain the process, answer questions, and keep you updated.
- Look for transparency in scheduling, pricing, and expectations.

Detailed Proposals

- A trustworthy contractor provides written proposals outlining scope of work, materials, costs, and timelines.
- Beware of vague estimates or verbal-only promises.

PRO TIP: MIX FINISHES CAREFULLY. FOR EXAMPLE, MATTE BLACK FAUCETS WITH BRUSHED NICKEL SHOWER HARDWARE CAN FEEL DISJOINTED. CONSISTENCY CREATES A POLISHED, INTENTIONAL DESIGN.

RED FLAGS TO AVOID

- Prices that seem “too good to be true.”
- Contractors unwilling to show proof of license or insurance.
- Pushy sales tactics or high-pressure decisions.
- Lack of references or reviews.

WHY HOMEOWNERS CHOOSE US

At Upstate Bath Renewal, we take pride in:

- Being locally owned and trusted in the Upstate.
- Specializing in bathrooms — with proven expertise in tile, waterproofing, and plumbing systems.
- Offering clear, detailed proposals with honest pricing.
- Backing every project with a 5-Year Workmanship Warranty.
- Communicating openly every step of the way.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Choosing the right contractor is the single most important decision in your remodel. With the right partner, your vision comes to life with less stress and more confidence. Take your time, ask questions, and trust your instincts — because a bathroom remodel isn't just about materials, it's about who you trust to put them together.



CHAPTER 18

CASE STUDIES

WHY CASE STUDIES MATTER

Every bathroom remodel is unique. Seeing how other homeowners solved their challenges helps you imagine what's possible in your own home. These case studies highlight real projects we've completed — showing the before, the plan, and the final transformation.

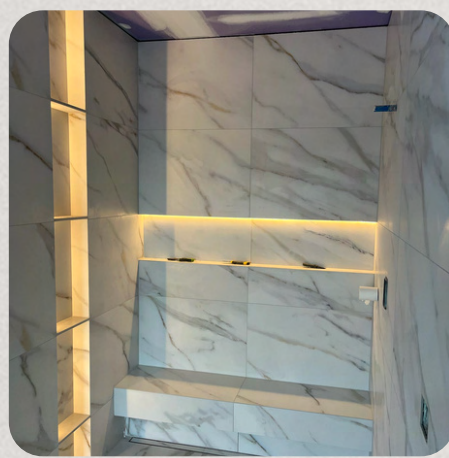
CASE STUDY 1: SMALL BATHROOM, BIG STORAGE

Location: Greenville, SC

Challenge: The homeowner had a compact guest bathroom with no storage and outdated finishes.

Solution: We installed a floating vanity to open floor space, added a recessed shower niche for storage, and used light-colored large-format tile to make the room feel bigger.

Result: The bathroom feels twice as large, with built-in storage that eliminates clutter. Guests now enjoy a bright, modern space that feels welcoming.



CASE STUDY 2: MASTER BATH SPA RETREAT

Location: Anderson, SC

Challenge: A dated master bathroom with a small fiberglass shower and builder-grade finishes. The homeowners wanted a “spa-like” upgrade.

Solution: We built a curbless walk-in shower with a Schluter® waterproofing system, added a rainfall shower head and handheld combo, and finished it with porcelain tile in a herringbone pattern. A custom double vanity with quartz countertops completed the look.

Result: The space feels like a luxury spa retreat. The homeowners love the thermostatic shower valve for precise temperature control and the LED anti-fog mirrors that simplify their daily routine.

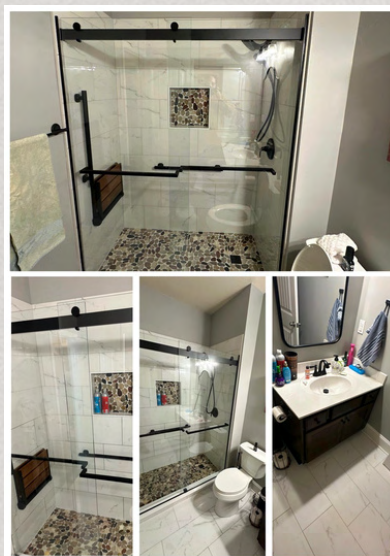
CASE STUDY 3: ACCESSIBLE REMODEL FOR AGING-IN-PLACE

Location: Spartanburg, SC

Challenge: The homeowner needed a safer bathroom without sacrificing style. Stepping over the tub was becoming a hazard.

Solution: We replaced the tub with a low-threshold walk-in shower, installed slip-resistant tile flooring, and added a fold-down teak bench with color-matched grab bars.

Result: The homeowner now has a stylish, safe bathroom that will allow them to stay comfortably in their home for years. The design looks modern — not “clinical” — proving that safety and style can go hand in hand.



CASE STUDY 4: STYLE ON A BUDGET

Location: Easley, SC

Challenge: A young family wanted to refresh their bathroom but needed to stay within a tight budget.

Solution: We chose a prefab vanity with a cultured marble top, paired it with LVP flooring for warmth and waterproof protection, and used a subway tile surround in the shower for a timeless, cost-effective look.

Result: The family got a clean, modern bathroom upgrade without breaking the bank. By planning smartly, we delivered style and function while respecting their budget.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Case studies show what's possible — whether it's maximizing a small space, creating a luxury retreat, planning for future safety, or staying within budget. No matter your priorities, there's a remodel solution that can meet your needs while transforming the look and feel of your home.



CHAPTER 19

BUDGET & TIMELINE

WHY BUDGET & TIMELINE MATTER

Every homeowner wants their remodel to stay on budget and on schedule. Setting realistic expectations upfront helps prevent surprises and makes the process smoother. Bathrooms are complex spaces, and while costs and timelines vary, a clear plan keeps everything on track.

BUDGET BASICS

Bathroom remodel costs depend on the scope of work, materials, and design choices.

What Affects Cost:

- Size of the Bathroom – Larger spaces require more tile, fixtures, and labor.
- Materials & Finishes – Tile, quartz countertops, and custom vanities cost more than prefab options.
- Plumbing & Electrical Changes – Moving drains or adding circuits increases labor.
- Luxury Features – Heated floors, smart toilets, and body sprays add comfort but also add cost.

Typical Ranges:

- Cosmetic Refresh: \$10,000 – \$15,000 (keeping layout, replacing surfaces/fixtures).
- Mid-Range Remodel: \$15,000 – \$30,000 (new tile shower, upgraded vanity, quartz countertops).
- High-End Remodel: \$30,000+ (custom tilework, luxury fixtures, spa-like features).

PRO TIP: PLAN A
10–15%
CONTINGENCY IN
YOUR BUDGET
FOR
UNEXPECTED
ISSUES (LIKE
HIDDEN WATER
DAMAGE) SO
YOU'RE
PREPARED.

TIMELINE BASICS

Most bathroom remodels take 2–4 weeks, depending on complexity and scope.

Typical Timeline:

1. Planning & Design (1–2 weeks): Product selection, finalizing layout, and detailed proposal.
2. Demo & Prep (2–4 days): Removing old materials and prepping the space.
3. Plumbing & Electrical (2–4 days): Rough-in work behind the walls.
4. Waterproofing & Tile (5–7 days): Installing backer board, waterproofing systems, and setting tile.
5. Fixtures, Vanity & Finish Work (3–5 days): Installing cabinetry, countertops, mirrors, and trim.
6. Final Touches (1–2 days): Punch list walkthrough, sealing grout, and cleanup.

Factors That Extend Timelines:

- Custom materials on backorder.
- Major plumbing or electrical relocation.
- Unforeseen damage uncovered during demo.

BALANCING BUDGET & TIMELINE

- Be Realistic: High-end finishes often mean longer lead times and higher labor costs.
- Plan Ahead: Ordering materials early helps avoid delays.
- Communicate Often: A good contractor keeps you updated on progress and any changes.

FINAL THOUGHTS

A successful remodel is built on clear expectations. By planning a budget with some flexibility and understanding a realistic timeline, you'll enjoy the process instead of stressing over it. The right contractor will guide you through each step, keeping your remodel on track, on budget, and built to last.

CHAPTER 20

TESTIMONIALS

WHY TESTIMONIALS MATTER

Hearing from other homeowners is one of the best ways to feel confident in your remodeling decision. Real feedback provides insight into the experience, not just the final result. At Upstate Bath Renewal, we're proud of the reputation we've built across the Upstate. Here's what some of our customers have to say:

"Nick and his team were absolutely amazing! They turned our outdated bathroom into a modern space that feels like a spa. Communication was clear the whole way through, and the craftsmanship is flawless."

— **Jessica M., Greenville, SC**

"I was nervous about a big remodel, but Upstate Bath Renewal made the process easy. They explained every step, stayed on schedule, and respected my budget. The new walk-in shower is perfect!"

— **David L., Anderson, SC**

"We wanted something safe for aging in place, and Nick suggested a curbless shower with grab bars and a fold-down bench. It looks amazing and gives us peace of mind. Stylish AND safe — we couldn't be happier."

— **Linda & Mark S., Spartanburg, SC**

"Professional, reliable, and detail-oriented. The new vanity and quartz countertop completely changed the look of our master bath. I would recommend Upstate Bath Renewal to anyone in the Upstate area."

— Karen R., Easley, SC

The Peterson Family — Anderson, SC

"Our old bathroom had a tiny fiberglass shower and a bulky tub we never used. We wanted something more modern and practical, but we didn't know where to start. Nick and his team guided us through every step — from picking tile layouts to choosing the right fixtures. We ended up with a curbless walk-in shower, a quartz bench, and a matte black rainfall shower head that feels like a spa at home. The whole project was finished in just under 3 weeks, and the crew was professional and respectful of our home the entire time. We couldn't be happier with the results."

— The Petersons, Anderson, SC

OUR PROMISE

Every testimonial is a reflection of our commitment to:

- Clear communication.
- Professional installation.
- Respect for your home.
- Lasting quality backed by our 5-Year Workmanship Warranty.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Your bathroom remodel should be more than just a project — it should be a positive experience. These testimonials show that when you choose Upstate Bath Renewal, you're choosing a contractor you can trust with your home.

CHAPTER 21

READY TO REDESIGN YOUR BATH?

YOUR DREAM BATHROOM STARTS HERE

You've explored the big decisions, design choices, and product options. Now it's time to take the next step toward a bathroom that's not only beautiful, but also built to last.

At Upstate Bath Renewal, we believe every homeowner deserves a space that reflects their style, fits their needs, and improves their everyday life.

WHY CHOOSE US

- Locally owned & trusted across the Upstate.

- Specializing in bathrooms — not just general remodeling.

- Transparent pricing & detailed proposals.

- 5-Year Workmanship Warranty.

- Built with proven waterproofing systems for peace of mind.

CALL US TODAY

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LET'S BUILD YOUR NEXT CHAPTER

Whether you're ready for a spa-like retreat, a safe aging-in-place design, or a budget-friendly upgrade, our team is here to guide you through every decision and deliver results you'll love for years.

Tagline: *Redesign Your Bath, Rediscover Your Home.*