

Master Builders

HOT TIPS for homeowners

FACT SHEET



Renovate your bathroom on a budget

When it comes to updating a bathroom, the costs really can drown your budget. However, Karen from KD Designs says there are ways to create a tranquil bathroom haven that won't cost you the earth.

The best way to give your bathroom a cheap overhaul is:

- use existing plumbing – moving pipes costs money
- replace the old toilet, vanity and taps for a new look
- use white tiles and paint to make your bathroom light and bright.

Use existing plumbing

The trick to renovating your bathroom on a budget is to keep everything where it was – changing the layout costs money because it usually means new plumbing, and possibly alterations to walls, windows and doors. You can save a great deal of time and money by reusing the existing plumbing, electrical and drainage positions.

If you want to move the shower or bath, for example, consider whether the cost to move it will really be worth it. Keep the original layout and you will keep your labour costs to a minimum.

Replace old fittings

- Replace your old vanity unit with a wall hung unit or one with large drawers for added storage. A long handle on the front top drawer can double as the hand towel holder – for a minimalist modern touch.
- If the vanity is still in good condition, just update the tap ware and handles. Shop around for fittings... go to the auctions and check out the *Trading Post*, *Weekend Shopper* or eBay, where you can pick up new fittings for half the price.
- Replace your old yellowed plastic toilet cistern with a fully vitreous china model. New toilets are a lot smaller than older styles, which will give you more room plus they are more water efficient and will help to reduce your water bill.
- Look for water efficient fittings such as water saving taps and showerheads, dual flush toilets and grey water systems to help save money and water.

Wall tiles and paint

For the wall, Karen recommends 300 x 600 mm crisp white tiles, laid horizontal or vertical, to add light and open up the bathroom. They can be complemented with a strip of coloured or textured feature tiles that run down the shower and above the vanity. However, remember that the coloured glass tiles and patterns will date more quickly, so keep the tiles fairly neutral.

If you want a classic bathroom that won't date, stick to white or neutral colours for the tiles, bath, shower and walls. You can update the look seasonally with accent pieces, which will add colour and personality to your bathroom, such as towels, floor mats, soap dispensers and other accessories.

Selecting tradespeople

Renovating a bathroom is a project that you will definitely need professional help with. Here are a few professionals that may be involved in your bathroom project:

- Architect or interior designer – will help draw up blueprints/plans and decide what style, fittings and finishes are best for you
- Plumber – you'll need a plumber to install or move pipes, taps, bath, and showers, and install drainage. Some plumbers also perform waterproofing,
- Electrician – will install lighting, power points, heating and ventilation
- Carpenter – necessary if you are moving doors or windows or making structural changes
- Cabinetmaker – will make vanities and cabinets to fit the exact specifications of your bathroom
- Tiler – can install new tiles or mirrors, and do the waterproofing. They can also resurface or remove existing tiles
- Painter – will paint any areas that are not covered by tiles or other elements.

Before choosing any professionals to help you with your bathroom renovation, ensure that they are qualified and licensed. One way of ensuring your tradesperson is licensed is to use a Master Builder member. To find a Master Builder, go to www.masterbuilders.asn.au and click on *Find a Member*.

You should always get a least three written quotes from registered and professional tradespeople. Compare the quotes, view previous work or jobs from each and, if possible, speak with past clients.

For more information about finding a tradesperson, refer to the *Find a builder* factsheet at www.homeandstyle.com.au, click on 'consumer fact sheets'.