



How to Remodel on a Small Budget

With a small-budget remodel, you're probably not going to make the room *work* better for you, but you can make the space *look* better. Start by flipping through home magazines for inspiration. The list of modifications below is in the order of greatest bang for your buck.

1. **Paint.** Wash and rinse the walls first to ensure that the paint will have a clean surface to stick to. If sanding is needed, and your house was built before 1978, you are required by federal law to hire a licensed lead safe remodeler/ painter. Find a qualified lead-safe professional at www.RenovationHorror.com/links.html
2. **Change the hardware.** New knobs and handles on cabinets can make a room look fresh.
3. **Improve the lighting.** Please hire a licensed electrician to do this, for your safety and the safety of everyone who comes to your home.
4. **Change the plumbing fixtures.**
 - You are allowed by law to do plumbing on the outside of a wall as the homeowner, but consider that the slightest mistake may cost you \$10,000 or more in water damage to your home and anyone who lives below you.
 - Buy your fixtures at a plumbing supply showroom. Fixtures purchased at home centers can be very different on the inside, even if they have the same famous name. The few dollars you save today will cost you hundreds of dollars later to replace. "Buy cheap, and you'll buy twice."
 - The difference between a well-working toilet and one that clogs all the time is less than \$200. Check reviews on-line before purchasing.
5. **Change the countertops.** Also buy some cutting boards to protect your kitchen investment.
6. **Paint the tile.** Sick of the pink tile? Is it otherwise in good shape? Get it painted. Let me be explicit on this one... hire a professional company that specializes in this skilled trade — Miracle Method is one. The special paint is unforgiving, if you can even find it, and regular paint will peel off. In either case, the tile will look worse than it did before, if you do it yourself.
7. **Change the flooring.** To get the great results you want, it's wise to hire a professional.
8. **With a small budget, you may be able to replace your bathroom vanity, but you are not going to be able to change your kitchen cabinets.** Even refacing will cost thousands of dollars, but you could paint them for a new look. See Suggestion #1.

For more information on remodeling without the aggravation, go to www.RenovationHorror.com

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