



Remodeling Adds Luxuries and Amenities for 21st Century Living

Today, more and more Americans are staying in their existing homes. Rather than buying a new house, they're choosing to do home improvements, remodeling projects or expand their current home with an addition.

"Homeowners are remodeling specifically to suit their needs and make their home a place they absolutely love," says Diane Welhouse, executive director of the Milwaukee chapter of the National Association of the Remodeling Industry (NARI). "They are weighing the pros and cons of moving and are making the decision to remain but are implementing improvements to create the home they've always dreamed of."

Kitchen Amenities for Everyone

When planning a kitchen remodel, today's homeowners consider the needs of the entire family and include design elements that accommodate everyone - even pets.

"There are no hard-and-fast rules anymore," says Greg Perkins, a NARI Milwaukee member, Certified Remodeler (CR) and president of GMH Construction, Inc. "Our floor plans and designs are created to match the lifestyle and specific interests of each individual homeowner."

According to Perkins, coffee bars, beverage centers, baking nooks and pet stations are just some of the customization requests from clients. They're also building easy-to-access appliance "garages" that are incorporated right into the cabinetry.

"For those who love to cook and bake, larger commercial appliances, double ovens, pot fillers, warming drawers and dedicated counter space that is used as a serving buffet are important," says Perkins.

Of course, there's also the technology that modern kitchens need to address.

"Since kitchens are the gathering place where stuff often gets dropped off, we're creating technology cabinets so cell phones, tablets, laptops and other devices can be charged and conveniently stowed away," explains Perkins. "Our clients appreciate a central storage area that's concealed so devices don't clutter up the kitchen environment they've created."

In terms of kitchen technology, appliances have become intelligent devices that make life easier and more convenient. Gone are the days when a refrigerator just kept your food cold. Also, gone are the days when only the wealthy could afford these conveniences.

"Even at a moderate price point, you can get appliances with built-in technology. For example, there are refrigerators that will find and read recipes to you or add items to your grocery list," explains Nicole Raffensperger from Design Tech Remodeling, also a member of NARI



Milwaukee. "Other kitchen technology includes ovens you can operate with a phone app."

Design with a Splash of Panache

Beyond functionality and technology, there's design. White cabinetry is still a popular choice among homeowners. However, stained wood finishes remain a classic.

"In Wisconsin, because of our long winters, home-

continued on next page

NARI Home & Remodeling Show

Don't miss the Home & Remodeling Show presented by NARI Milwaukee October 12-14 at the Wisconsin State Fair Park Exposition Center.

The show features more than 100 NARI member exhibitors who are showcasing the latest in remodeling and home improvement. Throughout the weekend, NARI members are on hand to answer questions, explain the newest design trends and innovative products and help spark your imagination and creativity.

Friday, October 12, Noon-8pm
Saturday, October 13, 10am-8pm
Sunday, October 14, 10am-5pm

Tickets: \$8 in advance (online only), \$10 at the door; Seniors (60+) are \$8 at the door; children & military (with I.D.) are free
Parking: \$6 (ample street parking is also available)
For more information, visit NARIMilwaukee.org



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21st Century

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owners definitely gravitate to warmer hues. Many are selecting a warm painted gray finish, a medium wood tone or even a soft driftwood finish. Driftwood gives you that aged, worn, cozy look that many people really enjoy,” says Raffensperger.

Even if a homeowner has selected white cabinetry, they’re often incorporating accents of color and personality through other design elements.

“You can add a touch of color with a decorative backsplash, contrasting countertop or patterned wallpaper,” says Louis Weiher, CR, owner of Carmel Builders and a NARI Milwaukee board member. “We’re actually doing a lot of walls in the kitchen and bathroom that utilize bold wallpaper.”

Lighting also offers an opportunity to infuse panache into a kitchen and entertaining space.

Pendant lights are no longer just a task light over the island, dining table or bar; they’re now artful additions to the room. There are literally thousands of choices that range from retro-industrial to hand-blown glass to geometric shapes.

LED under-cabinet lighting is a must for task work but when dimmed adds subtle ambience by producing a soft glow that accentuates countertops. Not so subtle are smart bulbs that can amp up a party or Packer game since they change colors and can be synched to music.

According to Christopher Wittmann, CR, who specializes in exteriors for Callen Construction, bringing in natural light is another frequent remodel request.

“Window walls, skylights and bay windows deliver natural light while opening up



the home to the outdoors. I tell clients forget their outdated perceptions of skylights! They’ve really advanced over the years and now operate at the touch of a button. Some even have rain sensors and close automatically in case of inclement weather.”

A Bathroom Oasis

After a long day, who doesn't want to unwind and experience pampering in their own home?

“Clients are looking for a respite from daily life, so having a luxurious bathroom where they can relax and de-stress is a common request,” says Raffensperger.

Walk-in showers, steam showers, free-standing soaking tubs, radiant floors, towel warmers and chandeliers are just some of the luxuries that are finding their way into master bathrooms.

As part of a remodel, homeowners are eliminating the old combination shower and tub and switching to a spacious walk-in shower. For added luxury, they’re incorporating multiple spray heads at varying heights that drench the entire body, creating a warm, soothing shower experience.

With walk-ins, glass enclosures are popular since they bring a bright, open and airy feeling to the bathroom. A transom window or skylight delivers even more light to the shower area.

“We’re pairing glass enclosures with really spectacular tile that’s textured or has an interesting tone or coloration to it,” says Perkins. “We have craftspeople who create amazing patterns and designs with tile so there’s a beautiful focal point in the master bath.”

Homeowners are also incorporating steam showers into their spa-like environment. Steam is said to relax muscles, promote healthy skin and help breathing.

“Over the past few years, we designed several ‘wet rooms’ where a tub is actually placed within a walk-in shower,” says Weiher. “It’s a water environment that clients can completely immerse themselves in.”

Many homeowners are embracing free-standing tubs because they offer a deep, luxurious soaking experience. The tubs are often placed in a prominent location and under an impressive chandelier to make a statement.

Exterior Innovations

While there’s a lot going on inside, homeowners are also investing in the exterior and taking advantage of new products that have been reengineered to provide more benefits and durability.

In the past 25 years, siding has seen a number of innovations. Composite siding that’s made with fibrous materials can replace traditional vinyl or cedar siding. Specifically, cedar is notoriously susceptible to insects and birds, plus requires refinishing.

“Today’s composite materials stand up to Wisconsin weather. The composite siding has a thick coating that adds to its durability and requires very little maintenance,” explains Wittmann. “For homeowners interested in staying with a vinyl option, new technology has now provided materials that help reflect the heat from the sun so it isn’t absorbed into the siding.”

Homeowners also have more color choices for their exterior. In the past, vinyl and composite materials were limited to light or classic colors. Darker, richer colors like deep grays, blues, reds, greens and browns were limited to painted wood siding.

“Because of fabrication changes, consumers can now have a wood grain look that’s been factory stained in darker, richer colors. You’re seeing garage doors, entry doors and even certain siding elements in a wider range of colors,” says Wittmann.

To make their homes more contemporary, homeowners are removing ornate, decorative features like turned spindles and balusters. Instead, sleeker, cleaner lines and contrasting colors are being used to make their homes stand out.

“With the new colors, products and enhancements, homeowners can give their exterior a totally new, fresh look,” says Wittmann.



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What's NARI?

NARI (which stands for the National Association of the Remodeling Industry) is a nationwide organization of trusted, proven professionals working in or with the remodeling industry. To become a member of NARI, all contractors are vetted by their local chapters to ensure that they are reliable, accountable and have established good business practices. Additionally, all NARI members adhere to a code of ethics that ensures honesty, integrity and responsibility.



NARI Milwaukee is the largest chapter in the country, boasting more than 700 members.

“Remodeling is a big decision and consumers are looking for quality and professionalism when they hire a contractor. Working with a NARI member means you’re getting contractors who’ve been vetted by us and are trusted professionals,” explains Diane Welhouse, executive director of NARI Milwaukee. “At the end of the day, we’re talking about qualified contractors for peace of mind.”

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TIPS FOR THE PERFECT KITCHEN LAYOUT

Choosing the layout and appliance location is an essential step in every kitchen remodel. Traditionally, kitchens were designed with the work triangle, which connects the three main work areas in a kitchen: the refrigerator, stove, and sink. While this is good to keep in mind while planning, this style has evolved into a more practical “work zone” concept, which fits into a variety of layouts.

GALLEY: A galley kitchen has two parallel countertops with a walkway in between them. Typically, the sink is on one side and the range is on the other. Galley kitchens are great because they make the best use of every inch of space and you don't have to worry about troublesome corner cabinets to configure. These types of kitchens are especially ideal for smaller spaces and one-cook kitchens.

L-SHAPE: An L-shape kitchen consists of two perpendicular countertops that come together and form an L. This layout, which adds a dining space and multiple work zones, is great for entertaining purposes because the cook is able to be near the guests and guests can eat without feeling like they're in the way. These kitchens provide a lot of space and you never have to worry about traffic, making it perfect for kitchens that are often busy with family and guests.

HORSESHOE: The horseshoe (or U-shape) kitchen layout has three walls of cabinets and appliances. This layout works well for multiple cooks to be able to easily work and move throughout the kitchen. Not only does this design maximize space, it also creates separation between the kitchen and dining areas.

ISLAND: Island kitchens add extra storage, can provide a place to eat, a place to prepare food, and can house appliances. Islands are incredibly functional and can add a lot to a kitchen, but make sure the kitchen has enough clearance space before adding one.

The most important thing about kitchen design is workflow. Make sure whatever layout you choose works for your lifestyle and fits the amount of space you have.

10 STEPS TO PREPARE FOR A REMODEL



NARI Milwaukee advises homeowners of the 10 most important steps to take before the remodeling project starts.

“The planning and researching phases are the most critical steps in the remodeling process,” said Chris Egner MCR, CR, CKBR, UDGP, CRPM, CCP, NARI Milwaukee President and owner of Four Seasons Sunrooms & Chris Egner Design-Build-Remodel “The more knowledgeable and prepared a homeowner is, the more they protect themselves.”

1. Research your project. Taking time to research projects on the internet and NARIMilwaukee.org will provide a good sense of what is involved such as price, scope of work, return on investment, and new product/material options. Also, research property values in your neighborhood to make sure your project is in line with other homes in the area.

2. Plan project around the long-term. How long do you plan to stay in your home? How might your family structure change over time? Life can change quickly-these questions should be answered early

on to ensure your project will fit your lifestyle long after it's complete.

3. Set your budget. Deciding on a realistic budget and arranging finances to support your project are essential. This number needs to include everything-the project, products, contingencies, etc. It's important to share this with your remodeler; professionals are respectful of a client's budget and will create a plan around it, not over it.

4. Use advanced search for professionals. The online world makes it easy to gather information. Ask friends, family, and neighbors for referrals and then spend time researching that person online. Professional remodelers take their reputation seriously and hold credentials beyond licensing, such as certifications, memberships in trade associations, and additional training. Look for examples of press coverage or involvement in industry presentations or events. Check online reviews and social media to see how they interact with past clients and peers.

5. Ask the right questions. Time and

cost are important, but getting the right information requires the right questions. Ask professional remodelers about their educational background, training, specialties, or past issues with clients. Also, ask about how the remodeling process will work.

6. Verify your remodeler. Don't take their word for it. Check the information given to you such as references, license numbers, insurance information, and certifications by calling providers to verify. Request a visit to an active client's jobsite. Make it known that you are checking on the remodeler-a true professional considers that as a positive sign to working with a homeowner.

7. Review contracts word-by-word. A remodeling contract protects you and your remodeler. Homeowners should review this carefully. Professional remodelers have done this before and know what should go in a contract. Homeowners are not as familiar with remodeling and should ask about terms if they don't understand. Pay attention to details about change orders, payment, additional fees, timeline and responsibilities.

8. Keep design in mind. Your design guides the entire project. Think about what you dislike about your current space and the intended use of the new space. Use the Internet and media to gather design ideas. Make sure you can articulate specifically what you like about that design when talking to your designer. Professionals don't recreate a photo - they incorporate accessibility, functionality, ease of modification, style, and value into your design.

9. Make your selections. Deciding on products and materials is a larger process than most imagine. With so many options to choose from, product selections are one of the primary reasons for project timelines to get extended. Base decisions on quality, function, price, style, and availability. Include selections in the contract to lock down pricing and keep your budget intact.

10. Create a communication plan. A common downfall in remodeling is lack of communication between homeowners and remodelers. Your remodeler should lay out a communication plan at the beginning of the project. If not, ask them to do so. This plan should clarify roles of everyone involved, communication methods, availability, and frequency of communication that is expected.

“The first step to hiring a professional is through NARI, whose members are vetted and approved by industry peers to ensure they live up to the professional standards that NARIs sets,” Egner said. “As a NARI member, I am proud of my affiliation and commitment to professionalism and I know my peers within NARI Milwaukee have that same allegiance.”

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How to Hire a Professional Remodeler



Finding a qualified professional remodeling contractor doesn't have to be a difficult task. NARI Milwaukee has some helpful tips to guide you in finding the best remodeler for your project.

"Do your homework when hiring a professional remodeler," recommends Chris Egner MCR, CR, CKBR, UDCP, CRPM, CCP, NARI Milwaukee President and owner of Four Seasons Sunrooms & Chris Egner Design-Build-Remodel. "NARI members are proud of their affiliation and commitment to professionalism, and it's a reputation they work hard to protect.

NARI Milwaukee's more than 700 member companies have met the association's stringent criteria for experience and professionalism, plus NARI members have pledged a commitment to the highest standards of practice and NARI's code of Ethics.

Follow these steps for hiring a professional remodeler:

1. Employ a contractor with an established business. Start by searching the NARI Milwaukee website at narimilwaukee.org. You can search by specialty and company. You can also research names of remodelers that may have been supplied by neighbors and friends to verify their NARI membership licensing and certifications.

2. Discuss your project with a couple NARI remodelers. Describe what you envision for the home remodel, styles you like, your estimated budget, and other ideas for the remodeling work. Ask the remodeler for references

and check out their website or brochure that describes their experience and accomplishments.

3. Ask questions about the contractor's business. Asking questions can help ensure you hire the best professional.

- Does the remodeler have all required licenses?
- Do they have general liability insurance in case of an accident on the job? Ask to see a copy to verify coverage.
- Do they guarantee their work?
- How do they handle any problems that may arise on the project?

Having these answers in advance help prevent future problems and nail down the best NARI professional remodeler for the job.

4. Check the references and background of the remodeler. It's important to do some background research after you have selected the remodelers who match your project's needs. Check with the Better Business Bureau, talk to their references, and ask if they are a member of a professional or trade association - NARI. Remodelers with these qualities tend to be more reliable, better educated, and more likely to stay on top of construction, remodeling and design trends.

5. Don't make the selection on price alone. Many people are lured by the lowest price to their remodeling project, thinking that they have found a great deal. But be skeptical of unusually low prices. These bids may cost more in the end, especially if the contractor is cutting

corners, not pulling permits, not calculating certain costs, or is inexperienced. Often, NARI professional remodelers end up fixing remodels from unscrupulous contractors who did shoddy and unsafe work or failed to complete the job. Beware that the lowest price may not ultimately provide the best value for your home remodel.

"Be smart when remodeling your home by hiring a NARI professional remodeler. They'll help you stay on budget, solve remodeling challenges, and provide a higher-quality service," Egner said.



Free Consumer Resources

Contact the NARI Milwaukee office at 414-771-4071 or visit NARImilwaukee.org to receive the association's free Membership Directory that lists all members by service category. You will also receive the NARI guide on "How to Select a Remodeler."

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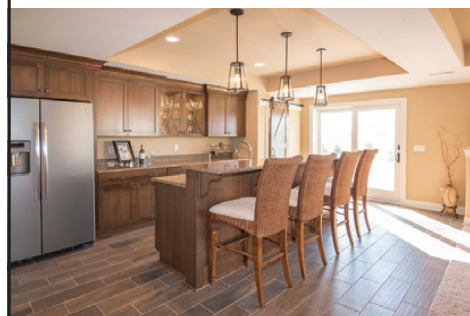
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