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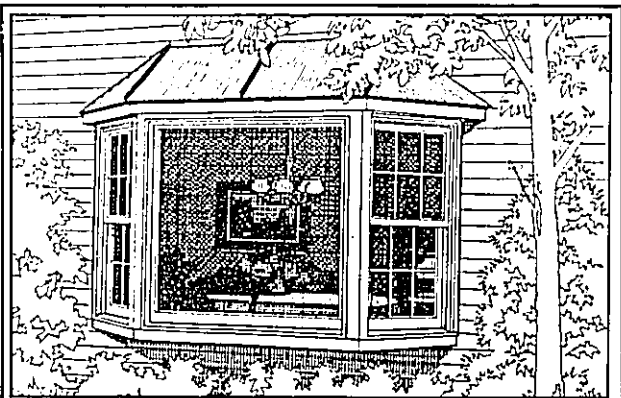


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Remodeling doesn't have to be nightmare

We've heard all about the architectural miracles of remodeling — and we've heard the horror stories, too.

But if you think chilling tales — like the one about the couple who had to sleep in the dining room for nine months while their bedroom was being remodeled, or the family who took seven years to add on a family room — are enough to scare the average American home owner away, think again.

At a projected annual dollar volume of \$58 billion in 1986, professionally installed residential remodeling will again top the new home construction industry, according to Qualified Remodeler Inc.

"For the third straight year, professional residential remodeling has outpaced new home construction," says David Sauer, president of Qualified Remodelers. "And in 1986, the gap has widened even further."

DO-IT-YOURSELFERS are expected to spend about \$19.5 billion in 1986.

"The trend is clear," Sauer says. "More and more American home owners are realizing that professional remodeling offers more options and is less expensive than uprooting the family and buying a new home.

"For example, with the recent decline in interest rates, second mortgage money is less expensive. By taking out a second mortgage for a remodeling project, home owners expand their equity, and at the same time retain the low interest on their first mortgage."

Great, you say. But it would be better if the job was a little less painful to live through.

Well, if you're contemplating remodeling, it's best to recognize certain facts from the onset, according to Richard Rosan, architect and president of the Real Estate Board of New York in "The Book of Inside Information" (Boardroom; 1985).

First off, plan on the job costing more than you expect. It's wise to add 20 percent to your lowest estimate.

YOU CAN ALSO count on the project taking longer than you expect. It's all right to be a pessimist in this situation — assume that everything that can go wrong will.

Armed with realistic expectations, you can minimize some of the problems. The best way is to move out, of course, or don't move in during the heaviest part of the work.

But this is a luxury many can't afford. If you must live in the house, try to get the bulk of the work completed in the summer when children are busy with friends, swimming lessons and camp, and workers can leave bulky supplies and equipment outside. Another plus: You'll likely have a vacation or a few long weekends to escape.

Choose a professional you can talk to and trust. Make sure supplies and workers are ready at the same time, then stay away from the work area as much as possible.

Be realistic in deciding what the professionals should do and what you can do yourself, especially if you hold a full-time job. Experienced workers should handle demolition, basic carpentry, wiring, plumbing and masonry, floor scraping and refinishing. You can probably tackle wallpapering, painting, stripping, sanding, tiling and laying parquet-wood floor squares with relative ease.

DO THE REMODELING in stages. Get a couple of rooms finished and clean and livable quickly. And during the remodeling, try to keep the area clean, even if the workers are coming back the next day to make a new mess. It will help the family morale.

You can survive a remodeling job. With proper planning, the work can go smoothly, and the end results might just surpass your expectations.

Window dressing

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powering as it would on a wall or floor while keeping trimmings to a minimum.

THE RIGHT WINDOW treatment can disguise an architectural blunder. Mismatched windows gain uniformity when dressed with draperies identical in size and style. Boring window trim disappears when shades or blinds are mounted edge-to-edge on the window casing, thus masking the molding while dressing the window.

If you need color or pattern in a room but don't know quite how to apply it, try adding it to the window treatment. The fabric represents a smaller space and smaller investment, so the pattern won't be as over-

powering as it would on a wall or floor and the curtains can be changed without major expense. For variety, try patterned shades.

Window treatments are also a great way to continue a room's theme. A sleek, modern interior environment needs the smooth, clean lines of metallic vertical blinds while perky cafe curtains or painted shutters best complement a country room. Try a wall-to-wall sliding screen in an Oriental room.

A window treatment can put the spotlight on a window, making it the focal point of the room. Who could ignore a stained-glass masterpiece set into a room's main window, or a window "layered" with tieback draperies over contrasting under-draperies.