



**HOME BUILDERS ASSOCIATION**  
of Dayton

## **Is Do It Yourself Remodeling for you?**

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According to the U.S. Census Bureau, homeowner do-it-yourself (DIY) projects account for 20 percent of all home remodeling performed nationwide. While there are a substantial number of weekend warriors out there, remodeling industry professionals report that between 25 and 30 percent of their work comes from fixing DIY debacles.

Some credit the desire among homeowners to tackle repair and remodeling projects to hit television shows like ABC's "Extreme Home Makeover" and the Discovery Channel's "Monster House." The introduction of cable channels with programming dedicated to all things home including HGTV and the DIY Network may inspire homeowners to take on home fixes and decorating challenges as well.

While most professional remodelers understand that homeowners will do some of their own home repairs or small renovations, overwhelmingly they believe that many jobs should be left to the pros.

The rule of thumb is that if a handyman service can do the project, then odds are that a good do-it-yourselfer can do it themselves, if they don't do it, then that's a good sign that you need a professional.

Think of it this way, remodelers wouldn't perform open-heart surgery on a loved one without medical expertise. Remodeling is open-heart surgery for the home—only professionals should attempt it.

A homeowner should look at a project, consider the worst case scenario and ask, “If it comes to this, will I know how to fix it?” Take it from my own experience of having a few days off work around the holidays and deciding to rework some plumbing. Something may go wrong and it’s too late when you realize that plumbers also take holidays off work.

I have learned my lesson, being around construction my whole life, I now hire a pro to do work at our house, because there are certain things I won’t touch anymore such as electrical and plumbing.

### **Advice for Do-it-Yourselfers**

There are some home projects that professional remodelers believe can be tackled by determined DIYers (depending on skill level) such as hanging pictures, interior painting, caulking, changing door knobs and cabinet pulls, and some aesthetic work such as installing crown molding.

If you are willing to put the time and energy into a do-it-yourself home remodel you should strongly consider:

- Follow product directions. Read everything that comes with the product and take it seriously.
- Get a detailed, illustrated home repair and maintenance book or study a product website.
- Conduct careful and thorough preparation. Set everything up and protect surrounding surfaces and furniture.
- Practice with the tools.
- Follow safety procedures and use proper safety equipment. Be aware of the dangers.

Consumers are cautioned not to take on more than they are capable of doing both in terms of time and skill. The biggest mistake the weekend handyman makes is to take on a project larger than he can handle in a reasonable amount of time. There are homeowners out there who have been remodeling their kitchen for more than two years.

Remember, DIY projects should be fun and suit your skill level. If they’re not, then consider hiring a professional.

For information about hiring a remodeler, visit [www.nahb.org/remodel](http://www.nahb.org/remodel) for more information on remodeling.