

Renovation Resolution



HOMEWORK
DESIGN STUDIO

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As 2012 comes to an end and 2013 draws near, we tend to spend time thinking about what we did and didn't do this year, and then we think of all the possibilities that the New Year will bring - that's where and when we start coming up with our resolutions. Interior Design does pretty much the same thing - as an Interior Designer, I start with the musings on a space - where can it go, what can it become, what does it want to be? So like all of our wishes, dreams and desires - they start with the thought but it's our actions that either lead us to success or failure.

Designing any interior space requires a degree of practicality which is essential as a starting point. So I will help you by giving you the process on how to get moving on your renovation resolution.

1: Arm yourself with a pen and a notebook because you will find inspiration all around you and will need to jot down sources, references and ideas. Get a box or file to keep all the clippings and reference materials you may gather. Carry a calculator and a measuring tape with you to keep specifications and costs of furniture and accessory pieces you find. Hoard magazines, brochures and colour charts. This stage is just about having fun exploring your awareness of styles, colours and shapes.

Think about the space, whether it is a bedroom or otherwise, as naked. This will help you make a critical appraisal; the room's architecture, natural light and spatial potential will be revealed.

Keep note of your questions, for example, are there basic priorities such as plumbing or electrical works needed? Do I have to compromise with existing accessories or furnishings? Where do I go for inspiration - online, a friend's home, hotels, commercial spaces, the mall?

2: MAKE A WISH LIST. This is a useful exercise to help prioritize what you would like to achieve.

Think of the overall benefits: Do I want to add value to my home? Do I want to maximize the space? Do I want a quick, cheap update?

Consider the function: Do I want a quiet retreat? Do I need a room where I can work sometimes? Do I want a room to listen to music? Do I want a room for guests?

Think of the fittings and fixtures: Do I need generous cupboard space? Do I need tons of bookshelves? Do I need to zone the areas - for bed and office?

The details: I want hardwood floors. I want better lighting. I want a contemporary vs. traditional styling.

3: MOVING FORWARD. Decide whether you need a professional; an architect, an interior designer, a contractor - each has specific skill sets that can assist you in making the right choices and handling the project depending on if you are building a home from scratch, renovating the existing home or just revamping a singular room. Build a budget with which you are comfortable in spending and add 15 percent for contingencies. Now use that treasure trove of ideas and notes you've built and start applying costs to each line item of the required pieces needed to finish the space.

Now you should be comfortable to start your project, as you are now informed, educated and inspired.

Stay committed to your resolution and I hope you will look back on 2013 with pride and joy on your successful renovation - big or small.

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