

The Renovation Starter Kit

PROJECT PRICING & TIMELINE GUIDE

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Living Room



Kitchen Room



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GETTING PAST THE STICKER SHOCK

The "HGTV Gap" is Real

The biggest mistake Bay Area homeowners make is trusting "National Average" pricing found on major renovation websites or TV shows. In many parts of the country, a "luxury" kitchen might cost \$45,000. In the Bay Area, that same project often starts at \$85,000.

Why? Because our local building codes, seismic requirements, and skilled labor rates are among the highest in the world. This guide is designed to close that gap and give you a realistic roadmap for 2026.



THE 90% RULE:



The Scope (Footprint): * Surface Refresh: Keeping the current layout saves roughly **20–25%** of the total cost.

- Layout Change: Moving a sink or range requires trenching or subfloor plumbing work, adding **\$2,000+** in specialized labor alone before the new floor even goes down.

The Selection (Grade of Finish):

- Standard "Semi-Custom" cabinets vs. High-end Custom Joinery can be a **\$25,000 to \$40,000 variance**.
- Quartz (Durable/Affordable) vs. Exotic Marble (High Maintenance/Luxury) changes your stone budget by **\$70 – \$180 per square foot**.

The Structural (Hidden Costs): * Opening a wall to the living room? If it's load-bearing, expect **\$7,500 – \$12,000** for an engineered steel or LVL beam, plus the required seismic tie-downs.

90% of your project cost is determined by: **Scope** (changing layouts vs. surface updates), **Selection** (material grades), and **Structural** (moving plumbing, gas, or load-bearing walls).

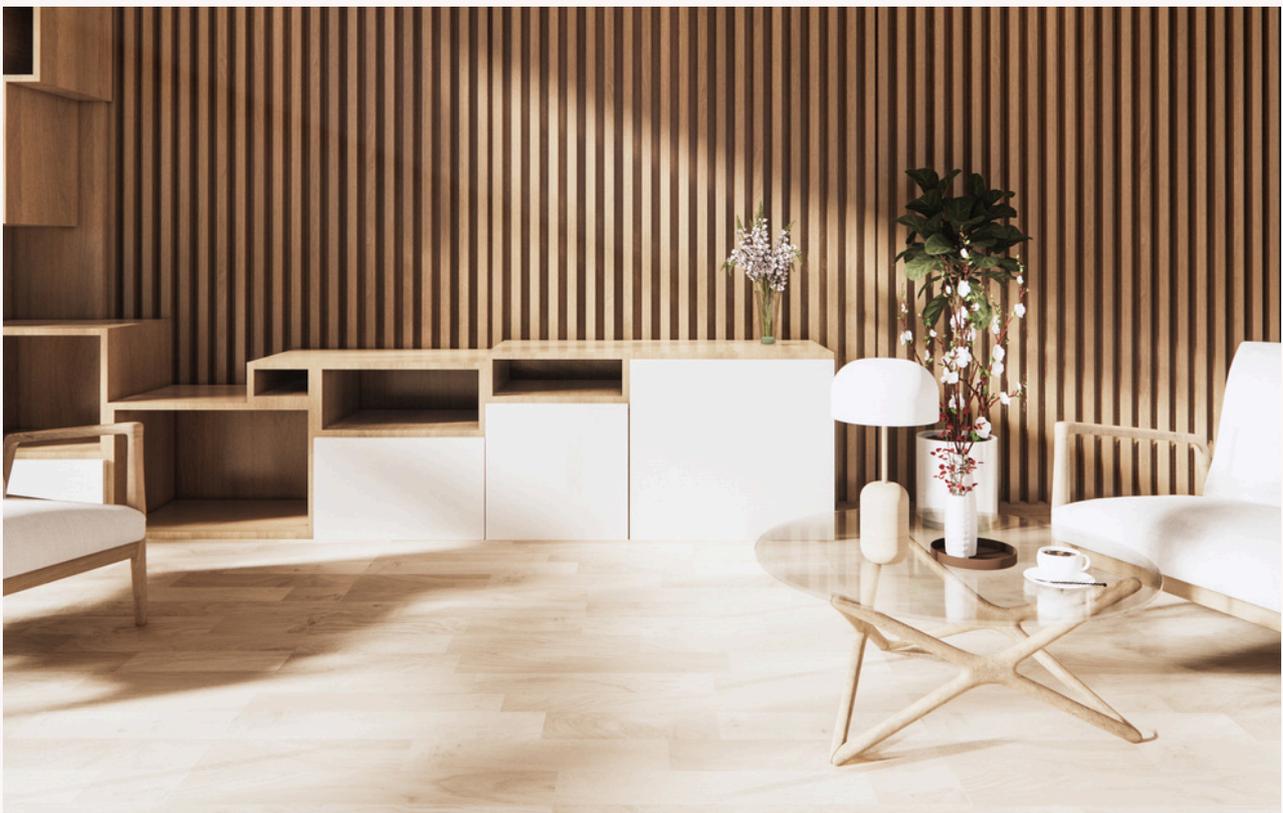


2026 REALITY CHECK & PROJECTION

In 2026, building in the Bay Area involves unique local "line items" that national guides ignore. Here is what to realistically set aside:

- Permit & Plan Fees: Unlike other regions where a permit is a flat \$500, Bay Area permits are often calculated as a percentage of the project value. Budget 2% to 4% of your total project for city/county fees.

Key Takeaway: *Clarity is cheaper than "surprises." By understanding these local variables now, you can prioritize spending on things that increase your home's value, not just its cost.*



CORE PROJECT BREAKDOWN: KITCHENS

Tier 1: The Value Refresh (\$25k – \$45k)

- Focus: High visual impact, low structural change.
- Materials: Professional cabinet refinishing or RTA (Ready-to-Assemble), Level 1 Quartz, high-quality LVP (Luxury Vinyl Plank) flooring.



Tier 2: The Mid-Range Modern (\$50k – \$95k)

- Focus: Enhancing workflow and quality.
- Materials: Semi-custom cabinetry with soft-close features, Level 2-3 Porcelain or Quartz, minor electrical upgrades (LED recessed lighting), and mid-grade stainless steel appliances.



Tier 3: The Gourmet Custom (\$100k – \$180k+)

- Focus: Total transformation and architectural design.
- Materials: Full custom cabinetry, exotic stone slabs (Waterfall islands), professional-grade appliances (Wolf/Sub-Zero), and structural changes (opening walls to create an open-concept flow).



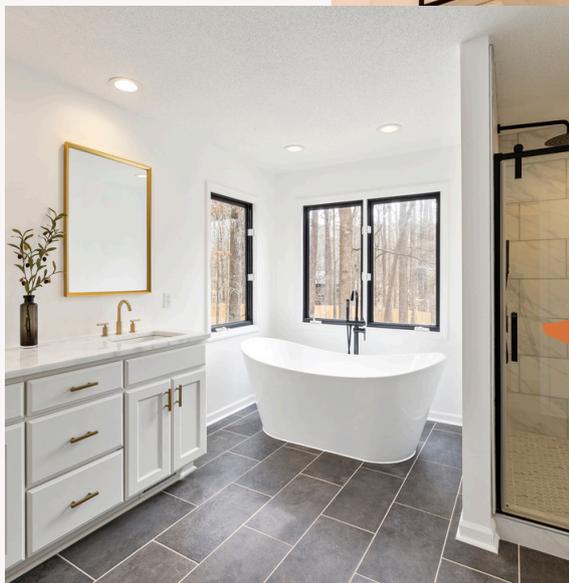
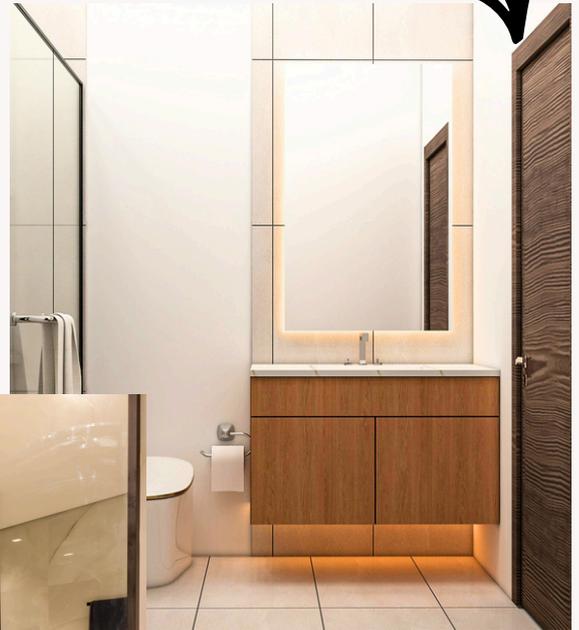
CORE PROJECT BREAKDOWN: BATHROOMS

Tier 1: The Surface Update (\$15k – \$25k)

- Focus: Clean, modern, and functional.
- Includes: New vanity, standard subway tile tub-surround, and updated plumbing fixtures.

Tier 2: The Custom Ensuite (\$30k – \$55k)

- Focus: Personalizing the "Primary" experience.
- Includes: Expanding the shower footprint, frameless glass enclosures, double vanities, and high-end porcelain tile.



Tier 3: The Private Spa (\$60k+)

- Focus: Ultimate luxury and wellness.
- Includes: Wet rooms (combined shower/tub), heated flooring systems, curbless "zero-entry" showers, and smart-home integrated fixtures.

DEEP DIVE: THE ADU ADDITION



The ROI Logic: In the North Bay, an ADU isn't just extra space; it's a secondary income stream or a massive "aging-in-place" asset.



- Garage Conversion: Typically \$120k–\$180k.
- Detached New Build: Often \$250k–\$400k+ depending on utilities.
- The 3-Point Feasibility Check: 1. Zoning: Are you in a high-fire-hazard severity zone? 2. Utility Access: Can your current electrical panel handle an extra unit? 3. Topography: Is the slope of your lot going to require expensive retaining walls?

THE PROJECT

TIMELINE REALITY



PHASE 1:

Design & Pre-Construction (4–8 Weeks):

- This is where we “build it on paper” to avoid expensive mistakes later.

PHASE 2:

The Permitting “Black Hole” (2–5 Months):

- Bay Area municipalities are thorough. We handle the paperwork, but the city sets the pace.



PHASE 3:

Construction (16+ Weeks):

- The “dusty phase.” We provide a weekly schedule so you always know who is in your home and when.

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