

Why You Should See Their Bathroom Remodeling Work Before Hiring a Contractor

When it comes to home renovation, the bathroom is one of the most personal and technically demanding spaces in the house. A bathroom remodel isn't just about picking out nice tile or a new vanity. It involves plumbing, waterproofing, ventilation, and electrical work, all of which have to come together in a relatively small area. Every decision has a consequence. A slightly off layout can make a shower feel cramped. A poorly sloped floor can lead to standing water. The wrong lighting can turn a relaxing soak into a frustrating chore.

Over the years, I've seen homeowners jump into bathroom projects with excitement, only to hit snags that turn the process into a long, expensive headache. The single best piece of advice I can offer to anyone considering a bathroom renovation is this: take the time to see their bathroom remodeling work before you commit. Not just photos on a website, but real projects in various stages of completion. That one step can save you from months of regret.

The Difference Between Looking and Seeing

Most contractors have a portfolio. They'll show you their best shots, often staged with perfect lighting and fresh grout. Those images are useful for getting a sense of style, but they rarely tell the whole story. A finished bathroom looks clean and polished, but what matters is what's behind the walls and under the floor. A quality remodel involves a lot of invisible work: proper waterproofing behind the tile, correct venting for the exhaust fan, and plumbing that won't drip in five years.

When you [see their bathroom remodeling work](#) in person, you can look for the details that don't show up in a photograph. Are the tile joints consistent? Is the caulk applied smoothly without gaps? Does the shower door seal properly? These are the things that separate a job done with care from one that was rushed. A good contractor will be proud to show you their work, not just the finished product but also the process. They will explain why they chose certain methods and materials. That conversation alone tells you a lot about their expertise.

[View the location on Google Maps](#)

I remember visiting a job site for a friend who was considering a contractor. The salesman showed us glossy photos of a master bath with marble hex tiles and a rain shower. Gorgeous. But when we asked to visit a current project, we found a bathroom where the shower niche was tiled with mismatched cuts and the grout was already cracking. The contractor had no good explanation. We walked away. That visit saved my friend at least fifteen thousand dollars and a lot of heartache.

What to Look For When You Visit a Job Site

If a contractor is hesitant to let you visit an active project, that is a red flag. A reputable builder will have at least one job in progress that they can show you. When you go, bring a list of things to check. Here are the key areas I recommend focusing on:

- **Tile work:** Check for lippage, which is when the edge of one tile sits higher than the adjacent tile. A little is normal with large format tiles, but it should be minimal. Also look at the cuts around corners and plumbing fixtures. Clean, precise cuts indicate a careful installer.
- **Waterproofing:** Ask how they waterproof the shower area. Are they using a liquid membrane or a sheet membrane? Is the waterproofing carried up the walls and around the curb? If the contractor can't explain their system, that's a concern.
- **Plumbing and drainage:** Run the water if possible. Check how fast the drain takes water. Listen for any gurgling sounds that might indicate a venting problem. A slow drain in a new bathroom is a sign of poor work.
- **Lighting and ventilation:** Is the exhaust fan vented to the outside, or does it just blow air into the attic? Proper venting prevents mold. Also check that the lighting is functional and evenly spread, not just decorative.
- **Trim and finishes:** Look at the baseboards, window casings, and door frames. Are they cut and fitted neatly? Do the paint lines look crisp? These finishing touches show whether the crew takes pride in their work.

Taking notes during the visit helps. Later, when you compare contractors, you'll have concrete details to reference rather than just gut feelings.

Why Seeing Work in Progress Matters More Than Photos

Photographs are staged. They capture the best angle, the best light, and the best moment. Real life is messier. When you see their bathroom remodeling work in progress, you see the reality of the project. You see how the crew handles dust, how they protect the rest of the house, and how they communicate with each other. A well-run job site is organized. There is a system for keeping tools and materials orderly. The crew wears appropriate safety gear. The homeowner's belongings are protected with drop cloths or plastic sheeting.

On the other hand, a chaotic job site with debris everywhere, radios blaring, and an absent supervisor is a warning sign. That kind of environment leads to mistakes. I once walked through a house where the bathroom crew had left their lunch wrappers and half-empty soda cans scattered over the new subfloor. The homeowner was embarrassed, but the contractor

didn't seem to care. That level of disrespect for the space usually translates into sloppy workmanship.

I also suggest talking to the homeowner if possible. Ask them how communication has been. Has the contractor been responsive to questions? Have they stuck to the schedule? Do they clean up at the end of each day? These soft skills are just as important as technical ability, because a bathroom remodel can take weeks. You will be living with that disruption. You want a contractor who makes the process as smooth as possible.

The Hidden Costs of Poor Work

Bad bathroom work can cost you in ways that aren't immediately obvious. A leaky shower pan can damage the floor below, leading to drywall replacement and mold remediation. A poorly vented bathroom can cause paint to peel and wood to rot. Electrical work that isn't up to code can be a fire hazard. Fixing these problems later is almost always more expensive than doing it right the first time, especially when you have to tear out finished work to access the problem.

That is why it is worth being picky. Don't hire a contractor just because they are the cheapest or the most available. Hire them because you have seen their work and you trust their process. When you see their bathroom remodeling work firsthand, you gain confidence that the finished product will meet your expectations. You also build a relationship with the people who will be in your home. That trust matters when something unexpected comes up, and it always does.

How to Approach a Contractor About Seeing Their Work

Some homeowners feel awkward asking to visit a job site. Don't. A professional contractor expects this request. It shows that you are an informed buyer. Here are a few tips for the conversation:

- Ask early in the process, before you receive a detailed quote. This saves both parties time.
- Request to see a project that is at a similar stage to what your project will be. For a bathroom, mid-construction is ideal because you can see the rough work.
- If the contractor offers only a finished project, ask if they have photos of the same project during construction. A contractor who documents their process is usually proud of their methods.
- If they refuse entirely, cross them off your list. There are plenty of good contractors who are happy to show their work.

I have seen homeowners make the mistake of ignoring this step and later wishing they hadn't. The few hours you spend visiting job sites can save you weeks of stress and thousands of

dollars in repairs.

Brother & Brother Builders, located at 3109 Stevens Creek Blvd Ste A, San Jose, CA 95117, can be reached at (888) 412-2632. They are a local company with a long track record of quality bathroom remodels in the South Bay area.