

Home Remodeling Tips

Tips for designing your remodel - virtually

By Kevin Mond

Were you planning to remodel your East Bay home in 2020? You still can. The most important stage of any remodeling project is the preliminary planning phase, so this unexpected spare time might just be the silver lining to your kitchen, bath, or whole home remodel project.

With everyone becoming familiar with the realities of virtual reality, many builders are adapting their processes to accommodate the new “normal” – with a few new considerations. Here’s how HDR Remodeling, a Design + Build firm, is adapting by donning digital toolbelts to continue facilitating the essential planning that ensures a successful home remodeling project.

Start the conversation – Virtually

Taking today’s shelter-in-place mandates into consideration, a home remodeling project can begin with a virtual consultation via video conference to discuss your needs and aesthetics and gain an understanding of your goals. Once the scope is determined, begin discussing options and budget considerations to finalize a proposal and design agreement.

Where the magic happens – Digital walkthrough and image capture

Here’s where residential remodelers are putting a new digital toolkit to work. A sanitized iPad equipped with a special 3D camera has been a saving grace for home walkthroughs. With easy-to-follow instructions on



iPad equipped with a special 3D camera.

how to capture images of the interior space, it’s as simple as walking through the room while the camera prompts you on how to proceed.

Once captured, these images are translated into 3D facsimiles of the room, which provide the starting point for accurate measurements for the design process and product selections.

Designers can now use the facsimiles of the room to create schematic designs and show sketches to help you make decisions about layout and product selection. These layouts and selections can be mapped into the plan to offer a 3D rendering of the space. The preliminary drawings and schematic design phase give you a glimpse of what your future remodeling project will look like when completed.

Product selection

Moving from the virtual towards the reality with product and finishes selection, designers can present options for your consideration to help finalize your choices, and even assist with

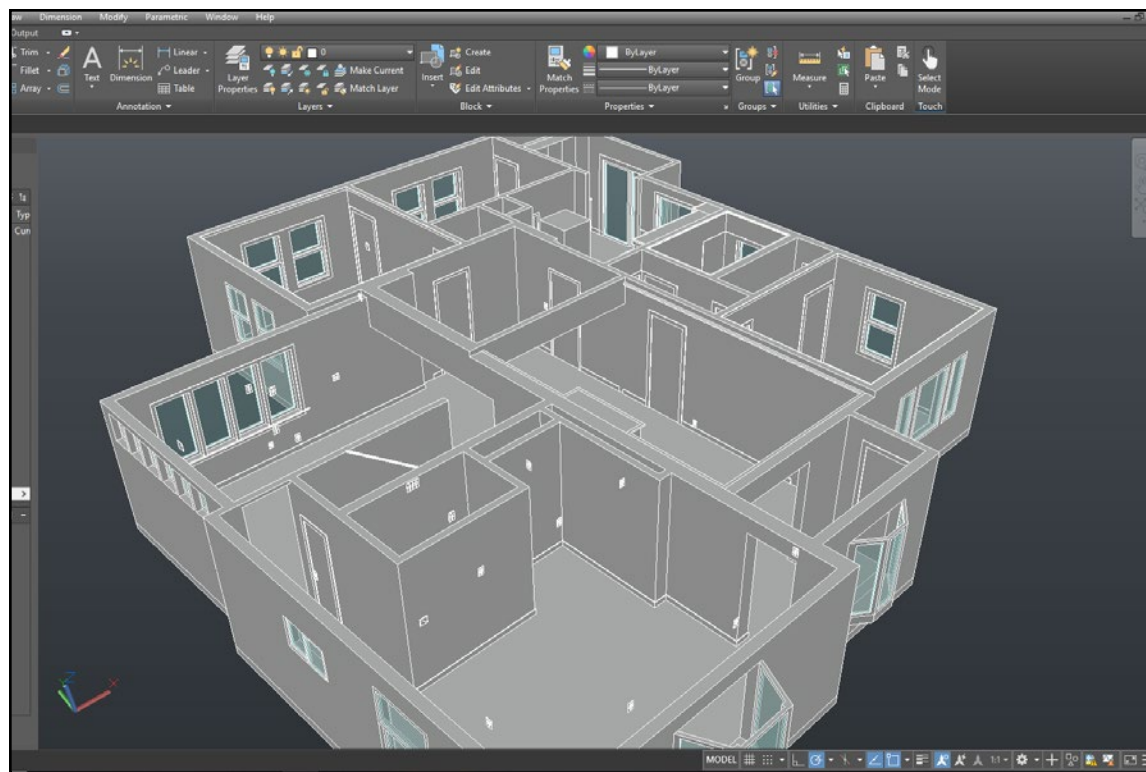
shopping for flooring, fixtures, appliances, and more.

Bidding and estimates

Once your plans and product selections have been finalized, you can step back and admire what you’ve accomplished without ever leaving your home. As you navigate from designing to building, you will need to nail down the final estimate, while beginning to entertain the idea of a construction production schedule and turn to the more traditional tools of our trade – hammers and saws.

It IS possible to move forward with your home remodeling project. Take this opportunity to *really* plan your project, where spending the extra time can ultimately save you time and money. For questions about designing your home remodel virtually, get in touch with HDR Remodeling today.

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Images are translated into 3D facsimiles of the room.

Books for the Beach

The Bookworm Recommends

By Peter Sownie

Do you like mystery novels? Do you like elegant writing? Here’s a name for you: Benjamin Black.

If you’re an avid mystery fan, you might already know this name. I didn’t. I was wandering around a used bookstore in Milwaukee a while back, kind

of restless, annoyed and impatient with the flat, dull writing I had been running into recently. I reached up haphazardly and opened one of Black’s novels, read a page and a half, and said, “This guy is great!”

I had never heard of him, so I Googled him and found he had won the Man Booker Prize. That certainly didn’t make any sense;

this major annual award for the best original novel written in the English language does not usually go to a crime novel. Took me a while to realize Benjamin Black is the pen name used by John Banville to write crime novels. This guy writes exquisitely, whether it be “literary” stuff or mystery novels.

So far I have read four Benjamin Black books featuring a pathologist in 1950’s Dublin named Quirke. Some titles in this series, *Holy Orders, Even the Dead* and *Christine Falls*.

I can’t say these books are cheerful. They have a noir quality, with a troubled atmosphere and a dark history around

**Piedmont Avenue
Library News**

Virtual hugs from the staff at local library

Your library workers miss you and can’t wait to see your faces again, masked or not. Meanwhile, we’re available in several different ways to help you stay connected with our resources.

Our e-book collections are getting more use than ever. If you’d like help getting with e-books, you can set up a phone appointment for a 30-minute session. To set up an appointment, use whichever way is most convenient for you:

1. Schedule [online](#) (only for regular hours)
2. Leave a message at 510-238-3134.
3. Send an email to answers@oaklandlibrary.org

What to read?

Not sure what to read next? Try OPL’s [Book Me!](#) Fill out this form for personalized recommendations for yourself, students, or a loved one. The site asks you to name a few of your favorite books and authors and let us know why you like them. Make sure to list anything in particular that you most like in a story such as action, strong characters, the way the author uses language, or location.

Legal advice

For people needing legal advice: [Lawyers in the Library](#) is back, now online!

It is a program co-sponsored by Alameda County Bar Association,

[Legal Access Alameda](#). To make an appointment, email eAnswers@oaklandlibrary.org or call 510-238-3134.

Face mask-making video

Check out [OPL’s YouTube channel](#), for fun and useful homemade content. There are story times and how-to videos from Oakland librarians. [Make a No-Sew Face Covering](#) has been especially popular.

We are currently discussing what the library services may look like once we can resume circulation of physical library materials. We do not have a timeline for when that may happen, but we’ll be sure to keep you up to date.

How to help your local library

Piedmont Avenue Elementary School is using the [GoFundMe](#) site to raise funds for the parents who are out of work or have shortened hours during the COVID-19/Coronavirus crisis. All the funds collected will be distributed directly to PAES families to support them in paying for rent, food, and educational resources to continue at home learning.

Click on Piedmont Avenue Elementary School’s [GoFundMe](#) fundraising page for PAES families in need and you’ll see their expression of thanks for support of their students, families, and community. They will appreciate donations of any amount.

The Lonely Library

By Ruby Long,

Where is everybody? No one has walked through my door for weeks. The phone hasn’t rung once. Wait – I hear something. It’s someone pulling on the front door. He says he can’t open it because it’s locked. But why?

I miss the kids. There is almost always at least one climbing or crawling around or sitting on someone’s lap. And I can feel their squeals of laughter in my walls when someone reads them a funny story.

There’s no one at the computers either; that’s really odd. No feet shuffling at the new books section; no one by the window rattling the newspaper.

You may be wondering

how I know what’s going on. I have no eyes, no ears, but I feel the weight of someone sitting in a chair. I feel feet pushing against my floor and heat from people’s bodies. The vibrations from people’s voices make my walls move. I know when folks are here, and I know when there’s no one here. I miss you all. You make me feel alive, and I don’t feel alive. I feel empty.

You’d think with all these books and computers, all this access to knowledge and information in here, that I could find a way to open up, but I can’t. So all I can do is sit here, wonder what’s going on, and hope it ends soon. I want to get back to the way things used to be, with the hustle and bustle of the past.

Quirke’s past, his present, and his relationships with all the friends and family members he loves. He has a drinking problem, and, since it’s the 1950s, he and almost everyone else are constantly smoking cigarettes.

These stories don’t really have happy endings. Things are finally understood, truth is finally revealed, but justice is not always done. However compromised the resolution at the end, I find myself rooting for Quirke, glad he persevered through all the difficulty to learn the truth, even if the bad guy doesn’t go to jail.

But all through Quirke’s difficulties, the writing is a joy. One

element I’ve found delightful is how often the natural surroundings describe the feeling of a scene. Here’s an example: “The plane trees on the other side of the street rustled their leaves excitedly as if they were discussing these two young people standing there in the midst of a Sunday morning in summer.”

How often do you find poetry like that in a mystery novel?

Peter Sownie, now retired, has lived in the Bay Area for 56 years, 35 of them working for large banks. He likes to travel, ride his bicycle, visit libraries and bookstores, and spend time with friends.