

# Should I remodel or move?

People regularly ask us, “*Should we remodel or move?*” Unfortunately, the answer is rarely straightforward. In this white paper, we’ll break down some factors to consider and help you determine which option is right for you.

You’ve probably thought through countless options for a remodel, but the question many folks aren’t asking is: “*Is my house a good candidate for a remodel?*” Some houses are better candidates for remodeling than others. This is based on their structural integrity, location, and potential for improvement.

Sometimes, moving a wall, particularly an older home, becomes an unexpected can of worms. Building codes and materials have changed significantly, and for the better, over the years. For example, we no longer use newspaper as insulation!

Below are a few questions to seriously contemplate before committing time and resources to remodeling your home.



*A bright & functional kitchen. Design by Spiral Studios.*

## Is my home a good candidate?

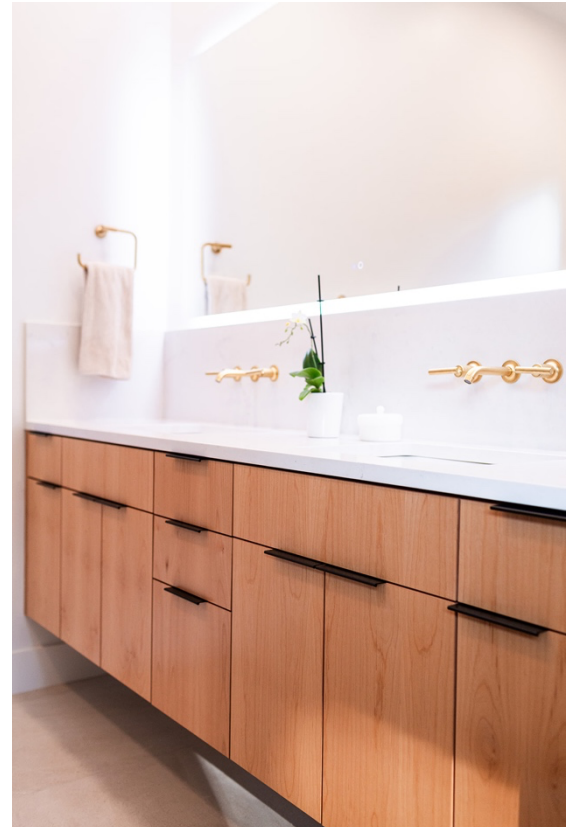
- **Location:** Do you love your neighborhood coffee shop, local brewery, or school district? Are your neighbors the best? Are you close to amenities that are important to your quality of life, like bus lines and hiking trails? These are extremely hard to replace and valuable assets. If you’re dreaming of a shorter commute or different local amenities, remodeling won’t help. The importance of location in making this decision can’t be overstated.
- **Structural Soundness:** Does your home need major structural repairs? Houses with good “bones” are ideal candidates for a remodel. If the structure is compromised (foundation or roof issues are the usual suspects), these repairs add up fast and may make moving more appealing than remodeling.

- **Outdated Features:** Homes with outdated layouts or designs can be fun to redesign! Updating existing fixtures, improving function and flow, and replacing finishes can dramatically change the feel of a home.
- **Historical Charm:** Older homes that have architectural character can be prime candidates for remodeling. Renovating an older home allows you to preserve unique features while modernizing them for your current needs.

## What are some typical obstacles?

We've been in this business for a long time. There's more grey hair around here than there used to be and a lot of hard-earned expertise. Whether you bought a home with the intent to remodel, or you've lived in it for decades and are ready for a change, remodeling is a fantastic way to revive an outdated space. And, as with any major project, there are some predictable obstacles:

- **TIME(!):** Working through the design process and remodeling is equivalent to a part-time job. It can be taxing and emotional and can strain even the best of relationships. There will be challenges and frustrations along the way, but if you go into it with your eyes wide open, it can also be fun!
- **Disrupting Daily Life:** Remodeling is disruptive, especially if essential rooms like kitchens or bathrooms are involved. Sometimes folks want to remain in their home during the remodel, however we don't recommend it. As wonderful as our team is, you probably don't want to see them every morning at 7 am. It's also important to recognize that job sites are noisy and dirty; power and water are typically turned off for long periods; and delaying work to accommodate household routines will inevitably add costs. For whole home remodels, we strongly encourage folks to find temporary alternative housing.
- **Underestimating Cost:** Remodeling can be expensive, and there are inevitably unforeseen issues mid-



*A warm & modern primary bathroom. Design by Spiral Studios.*

project. While system upgrades such as plumbing, electrical, and HVAC are big-ticket items that can be planned for, unknowns arise as walls are opened up. We include contingency allotments in our budgets, but it can still be an unpleasant surprise. If you're interested in doing some homework, the [Costs vs. Value Report](#) can give you a rough idea of project costs.

- **Compromising on Quality / Overlooking Sustainability:** At Chuckanut we focus on building and remodeling healthy, durable homes. Sometimes that means incorporating building techniques that are 'hidden', such as adding additional insulation, upgrading ventilation systems, and installing new windows. These upgrades will result in a significant improvement to indoor air quality, durability and the overall comfort of your home. And, while it can be tempting to skip these measures to save money or focus on more exciting updates like an updated kitchen layout or high-end tile and countertops, that's rarely the best choice. Our team can talk you through all of these decisions and connect you with a building designer who will help you identify the right mix of green building technologies for your home.



*High-performance construction on Chuckanut Drive. Design by Spiral Studio and Westgate Design Works.*

## Where do I go from here?

There's no perfect way to decide whether to remodel or move. Neither is straightforward or without some uncertainties. Moving can be a great solution for some folks, especially if you don't plan to stay in your home much longer, you're not emotionally attached, or you've been considering downsizing. However, if you have deep ties to your home or neighborhood and your home is structurally sound, remodeling may be the right choice. When you remodel you have the opportunity to preserve the aspects of your home that you love and change the parts that drive you nuts!

No matter which route you choose, know that we're here to help. Our team is ready to guide you through your options, ensuring that in the end, you feel confident in your decision and satisfied with the result: a durable, healthy home that meets your current and future needs!