

Giving a Room a New Lease on Life

Have you ever felt the need to reorganize the rooms in your house just to have a change? If you are in the mood for switching things up, read on for some helpful guidance.

Begin by **thinking about how the room is used** and if the layout and design are meeting your needs. You may discover that redesigning or refurnishing can give your home a revitalized look and expanded functionality. If it's a small space, choose dining tables that fold up or expand, or Murphy beds to fold up when not in use. If the room serves a dual purpose, adding a room divider might make it a bit more functional.

When reevaluating a room, **position the focal point first**, which is the largest piece of furniture, like a bed or couch, that serves as a visual anchor. Make sure that **the furniture you choose is proportionate to the room**. If your furniture is too big or there is too much of it, the room will feel cramped. If the furniture is too small, the room will feel too empty. If space allows, move the furniture away from the walls for an airier feel. If the décor



is outdated, consider modernizing the look. Keep the **design cohesive** by choosing furniture of different sizes. Adding **mirrors** can significantly enhance a room's dimension and create an illusion of spaciousness.

And if you want to take your room refresh to the next level, consider hiring an interior designer.



6 Dangerous Smells to Be Wary of Around Your Home

1. **Sweet** smells could indicate there's a coolant leak from the HVAC system or refrigerator, which can be toxic if inhaled.
2. **Fishy or burning** smells could indicate an electrical issue and a potential fire hazard.
3. **Rotten egg or chemical** smells could be a crack in your furnace's heat exchanger, a natural or septic gas leak.
4. **Musty or mouldy** smells can indicate water leaks and/or poor ventilation.
5. **Sewage or rotten meat** smells could be a clogged or cracked pipe, or a blocked air vent.
6. **Ammonia** smells might indicate a decaying animal, pet urine, or an appliance or gas leak.

To avoid carbon monoxide poisoning, which is odourless, always keep a working detector in your home.

Note that this is not an exhaustive list. Always hire a professional if you are unsure.

Getting Your Reno Ducks in a Row

Whether you are an enthusiastic DIYer ready to tackle your next reno, or you know someone who is, before the project starts, read on.

Research whether any **permits or trade authorizations are required for the work being done, or if there are any zoning regulations related to your project**. Failing to do so can result in fines, denied insurance claims, cancelled or stalled renovations, or complicate the potential sale of your home.

Typically, you will need some form of authorization for **structural changes** to your home (e.g., removing load-bearing walls or adding new openings), altering your **electrical or plumbing systems** (e.g., rewiring, installing new circuits, changing water supply and drainage systems), and **significant changes of use** (e.g., adding a suite or converting a garage to a living area). Other possible reasons for needing an authorization could be new fences, windows, siding, or replacing a water heater.

Rules regarding renovations **vary by municipality**, so before you start your next reno, check your municipal regulations and bylaws, and what your **insurance policy** requires for coverage.

