



## Where to begin

**H**appy New Year to you and I wish that 2018 is a very happy, healthy and prosperous year for you all. If you are like many of my clients, you spent some time over holidays discussing the renovation you would like to do to some or all of your home, and many of you may have even decided to pull the trigger and start your project.

So, I think it would be a good time to go back and talk about how to get started as that seems to be the biggest hurdle for a lot of people. Just where do I start and who do I call?

But, before you call anyone, sit down and decide two things:

1. What is it I really want to accomplish with this renovation and how far do I want to go? Basically, what is the scope of work going to be?
2. What is my budget going to be? This is harder to calculate at the preliminary stage as many of you do not have costing knowledge or experience. But you should know what you are comfortable spending.

Once you have made these decisions there are two routes you can go, both of which should require some additional

home work on your part. To start the discussions about your project and the realities of it, you're going to call either a professional interior designer for an initial consultation or a design-build firm who can handle everything. Calling builders at this time is not the best choice as you have nothing more than ideas at this point and without proper plans or documentation you're going to get costs and opinions all over the map.

Start asking friends, neighbors and associates who have had work done for any recommendations and check with local building associations and designer groups. Do your internet research and check out who has done projects just like yours in the past. However, don't be overly impressed with websites. Some are fantastic because they are great website builders more than they are great home builders and renovators.

Once you have narrowed it down to maybe two of the best candidates in either direction you have chosen, take the time to meet with them and get answers to all your questions. In the end, it really comes down to who you feel solid and confident with. Who listens to your wishes without imposing and insisting on their ideas. Who are you going to be happy working with, for what could be up to a year long relationship, and do you feel good about the trust you have placed in them.

No build goes perfect but if you spend this time up front you will certainly minimize time and money on the project. Good luck

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*Wayne Sage is the owner and President of Harwood Design Builders, a multi National and Provincial award winning Winnipeg Design - Build contracting firm and a certified Master Renovator.*



WAYNE  
SAGE