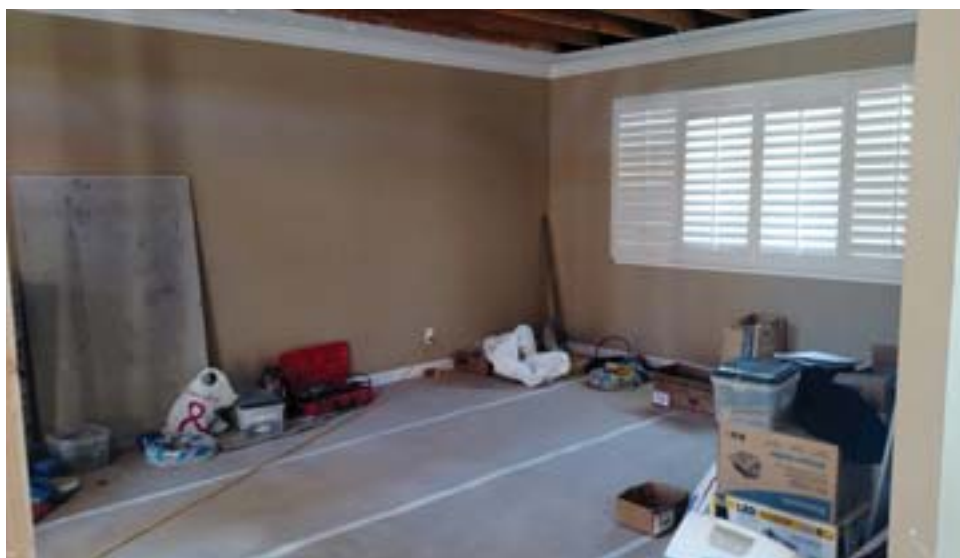




Digging Deep with Cynthia Brian

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Home remodel planning during a pandemic



Before

By Amanda Eck

Now more than ever we are seeing that our homes have become a place of not just comfort, but an office, a classroom, and even a vacation substitute. Homeowners are embarking on remodels now more than ever. I thought I'd share some tips on what to expect during a remodel if you are choosing to stay in your home during construction. And how to make the best of upending your life to hammers, drills and dust.

Did I mention the dust?

1) The dust gets everywhere (I mean *everywhere*). Especially when things are being torn out. Even when areas are taped off in plastic, those little particles have an amazing ability to sneak into other parts of the home. You might want to consider moving pieces into storage if you are concerned with dust, especially if you suffer allergies.

2) Sleeping in is no longer an option. You will have people in your home day in and



After

Photos provided

day out. Most crews like to start as early as possible. If you need your beauty sleep, like I do, consider an earlier bedtime.

3) Set up a separate living space. You will need a place to sit, work, cook, eat and wash up. Try and make this space as clean and organized as possible. You will want a space that feels "put together" as the rest of your home is in chaos.

4) Consider installing a portable sink in your laundry room to make clean up easy. Set up a microwave in the garage or extra room you are not using. Purchase an electric tea kettle for hot water for tea, hot coco for the kids, or instant oatmeal for an easy breakfast. An outdoor grill or camping stove are a must.

5) This is not the time to worry about the environment. Yes, I said it. Paper plates, bowls, cups, towels and plastic utensils are your best friend.

6) Stay organized. If you are not working with a designer, keep a binder with all the info for your project. Designers keep a selections binder with all the pertinent

information for your project like paint selections, hard surface selections (flooring, countertops, tile), elevation sketches, carpentry details, tile layout patterns, etc. Have divider tabs for each room you are remodeling. Keep all the phone numbers, emails, etc. of all the trades that are working in your home. Print out any email or text exchanges you have with your GC or other trades. There is nothing worse than a trade saying, "You didn't tell me that." Guard this binder with your life. A clear plastic sleeve to keep all your receipts and invoices in one place is also helpful. You can also add a sleeve for takeout menus because, hello, takeout is your new best friend. And it helps support our local restaurants – it's a win-win.

7) Your contractor and their trades will be your new family. Having a good professional relationship with your GC is gold. Ask friends and neighbors for referrals. Specifically ask how they treated the home while onsite.

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