

# BEAUTIFUL BATHROOMS

BATHROOM IMPROVEMENTS CAN BE ONE OF THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES ON THE RENOVATION SCHEDULE. HERE ARE OUR TIPS TO MAKE IT THAT BIT EASIER.

## LATEST TRENDS

Want the bathroom of the future? Square basins are on the way out and organic shapes are the 'new rectangle'. Shower screens are all but invisible, and so are obvious demarcations between shower and floor areas. Stone tiles, pebble floors and Zen minimalist effects are about simplifying and de-stressing, with bathrooms taking their cues from day spas. Hide your storage in carefully designed cupboards recessed into wall spaces or seemingly solid bases for vanity handbasins.

Also pay attention to the use of colour in your bathroom. Colour is the fastest way for bathroom tiles and fittings to become last year's fashion. Opt for neutrals, naturals or white, using accessories or paint to add a splash of colour and a striking effect.

## PLANNING PRIORITIES

Don't know where to start on your bathroom planning? Make a list of 'must haves' and then a list of 'optional extras' and refer to these when researching products to suit your scheme, space available and budget. Baths and vanities come in a wide range of sizes and shapes – it's amazing what you can fit in a small area with careful planning. Always measure the space carefully and remember to allow for the thickness of tiles and fittings when space is really tight.

## BUDGET BEATERS

Money too tight to mention? While you do need to employ a licensed plumber to install fittings, you can save money by choosing fittings and finishes carefully and using DIY-friendly



products such as James Hardie Ezi-Grid® Tile Underlay which is simple to cut and install. Minimise tiling costs by using HardiGlaze® Tile Sheets or HardiGlaze® Satin, Smooth or Premium Sheets to provide pre-finished wall linings for showers and bathroom areas. In classic white, these pre-finished sheets provide an elegant neutral background. Add colour and personalised touches with your choice of towels and bathroom accessories.

## RENOVATION RESCUE

Water damage appearing in adjoining rooms from outdated bathrooms? Many old houses have leaky showers which cause surrounding timbers to rot, damage walls and carpets, and invite termites. After old walls have been removed and any timber damage made good, new water-resistant linings should be installed. Choose James Hardie Villaboard® Lining to provide a durable, water-resistant base for tiling, with Hardipanel® Compressed Sheets or Ezi-Grid® Tile Underlay for floors.

## HOT 'N' COLD

Don't want to freeze once you get out of a hot shower during winter? A wall-mounted radiant heater, or an overhead combined heater and extractor fan will warm the bathroom while you

dress. Heated towel rails are a great way to dry towels and it's much cosier being wrapped in a warm towel after a hot shower. Add easy-care bath mats and suddenly the whole bathroom is much more cosy and comfortable. But don't forget that effective ventilation is a priority in keeping bathrooms mould-free and sweet-smelling. Install a fan or ensure windows allow cross-ventilation.

## BEAT THE RUSH

Only space for one bathroom? Then make your bathroom multi-person friendly. Think about separating the toilet and installing it's own handbasin. Also consider installing double handbasins with separate powerpoints and storage areas underneath to avoid queuing for the toothpaste or hairdryer. If room allows, a separate shower and bath can also speed up things with kids.

## THE RIGHT LIGHT

Want to know what you really look like before you head out the door? Avoid applying your make-up or shaving in the dark by installing the correct lighting. Bathrooms need two sorts of lighting apart from natural light. For grooming purposes, the best light is going to come from wall-mounted fittings which actually light your face as you look into the mirror, rather than one overhead light which will highlight the back of your head. When you want to have a relaxing soak in the bath, mood lighting is much kinder than bright lights. Consider having a dimmer installed if you're planning to include a bath or spa, or make sure candles are always at hand. ■



Zen-like stylings and neutral colours create a classic, elegant bathroom that will stand the test of time.