



**Your Local Stress-free  
Remodeling Experts**



# **Stress-Free **Basement Finishing** Ebook**

**Everything you need to know  
about the basics of basement finishing.**

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# INTRODUCTION

There is so much potential that can come from an unfinished basement. You can create a relaxation zone that your family and friends will enjoy or even a mini-apartment for your college student who isn't ready to leave the nest. No matter what you decide, finishing your basements can be one of the most gratifying home improvement projects you can do that can also increase the value of your home.

At Valor Home Services, we are the experts in renovating, repairing and remodeling. In fact, we hand-selected and trained the current remodelers we have on our team. We always strive for not only the best but to provide you with a stress-free experience.

To make your life a little bit easier, we made this guide as a quick overview of everything you need to know about basement remodeling.

**This eBook will introduce you to the basics of basement finishing. It's nice to have a guide as well as inspiration to help you with all your basement needs. That's why we created this eBook to help you along the way.**

# Questions to Ask **Your Basement Finisher**

Finishing your basement is a big job that comes with a load of questions. You want to make sure all your concerns and questions are answered, but you also want to make sure you are asking the right questions. Before going with any team, make sure to ask these questions to your basement finisher.

## **Are you licensed and insured?**

Safety and security are a high priority for many homeowners, especially when they are letting others into their homes. An important question that gets skipped is asking your finisher if they are bonded, licensed and insured. A company with bonded workers has a security plan for homeowners where if the workers do not finish the project, the bond provides compensation for property owners. A bonded business guarantees payment if certain conditions are met or reimbursement if they do not fulfill their contract. Having a license means that the company can legally work on your home. And working with an insured company ensures that if the employee gets hurt at your home during a job, you are not financially responsible for their medical expenses. If you work with Valor Home Services, we are bonded, licensed and insured, so you can feel safe and comfortable with any project that we do.

## **How long have you been in business?**

While looking for a basement finisher, you are going to want to know how long they have been in business. You are going to want to know if the company has worked with many clients and has had a successful business. Typically, the more time the company has been around, the better service and outcome you will have. If you cannot find any information or they refuse to tell you about how long they have been working on kitchens or how long their lead remodeler has, then it is time to move on to the next company. Valor Home Services has been working in homes for over 25 years.

## **How long will it take to finish my basement?**

Before agreeing to let a remodeler come into your home, you need to know how long it will take to finish your basement. Without a schedule, a project that should only take a couple of weeks will take months or even longer to complete. Or even worse, your contractor may end up never finishing your remodel. Valor Home Services can take anywhere from one to eleven days depending on the size and what all needs to be done.

## **Do you offer a warranty?**

Do you want additional protection even after the project finishes? Accidents happen, and your basement can incur damage. You need to ask the basement remodeler if they offer or include any warranties or guarantees. At Valor Home Services, we have a Craftsmanship Guarantee. This warranty covers the labor of the project for three years. It does not protect the product though. Instead, every product will vary depending on the manufacturers' guarantee or warranty.



### **How often will we communicate about the basement's progress and in what manner?**

You do not want a contractor to keep you in the dark. Instead, you want a company that will give you updates and talk to you about the whole process. From day one, our goal is to be 100% transparent. In fact, one of our three promises is better communication. Before starting the project, our team will email, call and text you with the next steps and reminders. When our team does head to your home, we send 'on my way' messages before reaching your property. During the renovation, we will give you updates on the progress as well as notifications if supplies and materials ship and arrival dates. You are also welcome to call us at any time.

### **Do you offer financing?**

Anytime you work with a basement remodeler, you should ask for photos or videos of their past work. You always need to see past projects photos to see if the company can provide you with what you need. If you are looking for our project photos, you can find them on Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, Pinterest and Nextdoor. You can also check out past customer reviews on our website.

### **Can I see past work?**

The one thing that we want you to get out of doing a kitchen remodel is that you should never do it alone. If you do not have the supplies, equipment, knowledge or expertise, you will cause more damage and elongate renovation times. And, we all know the kitchen is one of the most important rooms of the house; therefore, you need it to be operational as soon as possible. The best way to stay on time and reduce your chances of major mistakes is to work with a knowledgeable team of remodelers.

### **Do you have a designer to help me with my selections?**

When finishing or remodeling your basement, you may have a lot of ideas, but you want a designer to help you narrow down your ideas and determine what can happen. However, not every company offers a designer. Instead, they only have their production team. To make sure your wants and needs come to fruition, you need to sit down with a designer to find what will and can happen. At Valor Home Services, our team has a designer that will sit down with you and finalize your selections.

# Top 10 Reasons Why Homeowners Want To Finish Their Basements

## 01 Increase Home's Value

Bigger, updated homes sell for more. That is a fact. By finishing your basement, you are adding square footage to your home; therefore, increasing your home's value. Depending on the update and if you follow all your local building codes, you will see an increase in the value of your house. When remodeling a home around the St. Louis area, expect to get about 60% on the return on investment. This means you will get about 60% back of what you spent on finishing your basement when you sell your property.

## 02 Add Additional Living Space

Sometimes your family grows to the point where you can't house everyone in the upper part of your home. In other cases, you take in additional family members or friends. Some homeowners may even want to take on a tenant to make extra money. No matter the reason, many people finish or renovate their basement to create additional living space. Depending on the size of your basement, you may be able to create two or three rooms. If you want to make it into an apartment, you will want to also add in a bathroom and a kitchen or kitchenette.

## 03 Not Functional

A common reason people update their basements is that it is not functional. What unfinished basement truly is? Instead, many homeowners want this additional space to be useful. For example, creating an office or laundry room would create a great purpose in the space.

## 04 Add Additional Space in General

Your basement does not have to be only living space. Instead, it's just a great way to add additional space in general to your home. Then, you can do whatever you want to the area — entertainment room, wine cellar, etc.

## 05 Create a Modern Home

Modern homes have finished basements. If you want a home that is considered modern or contemporary, you need to complete the basement. Once you have this contemporary home, it will accomplish most of the other reasons on this list.

## 06 Expand Square Footage

As we mentioned above, bigger houses sell for more. Therefore, a common reason homeowners renovate their basement is to expand the home's square footage. Your home's value is determined starting with the square footage of your home, and once that is determined, an appraiser will add on the updates you have.

## 07 Boost Comfort

For many homeowners, having a finished basement boosts their overall comfort in their homes. What person likes the feeling of having something unfinished in their home? Unfinished basements are prone to dust, bugs, pests and other issues. By renovating or converting your basement, you are not only upgrading it but adding comfort as well.

## 08 Create More Appeal

Out on the housing market, which house do you think is more appealing — a home with a finished basement or one with an unfinished one? The answer is a finished basement. People are more willing to look and purchase a home that has a finished basement. Why? Because it is one less step they have to worry about when they move in.

## 09 Outdated

Another common reason why people remodel their basement is that it is outdated. As you know, any part of your home that is not updated within 10 to 15 years is out of date. So many new technology and sustainable advances have come out that you will want to add to your basements, like smart technology, waterproof flooring and more.

## 10 Create Versatile Space

A finished basement is one of the most versatile spaces in your home. As we mentioned above, you essentially can do whatever you want with it. The options are limitless. Here are some conversions you can try:

- Playroom
- Office
- Entertainment or game room
- Wine cellar or bar
- Gym
- Craft room

# Who Should Help Me Finish My Basement?



While you do not need a finished basement in your home, it is always great to accomplish. For example, it can raise the value of your home or create extra space for you and your family and friends can hang out. The first step in your basement remodel is to figure out who can help you. That's where this guide comes to play. Keep reading to find out.

## Designer

If you have an unfinished basement or are starting from scratch, you must work with a designer to plan the space. The designer will ask for your wants and needs and any inspiration photos. Feel free to go into as much detail as possible. They will do a complete walkthrough (with a contractor or project manager) and plan a guide or blueprint of where everything needs to go. Your designer will also discuss materials and additional features you may want as well. At Valor Home Services, we use a designer for all major renovations and remodels, including basement finishing.

## Remodel Company

Once the design is complete, we recommend working with a remodel or home improvement company. Some businesses like Valor Home Services will have a designer on their team, but always ask the company you are working with to see if they have one. If not, find a designer first and then go to the renovation team. The remodeling company or contractor will follow the plan and remodel the room. This part of the process varies with time, but most basement remodels take about two weeks.

## Interior Decorator

After the remodeling comes the fun part — decorating. Many homeowners feel comfortable on their own decorating their basement, but if you want to take the room to the next level, we recommend working with an interior designer or decorator. A designer will gather information from you like — themes, colors, budget and any other relevant information. From there, they will get to work and decorate your basement.

## Valor Home Services

You do not have to look far for the best stress-free basement finishing team in your area. Valor Home Services has your back! We have been in the industry for over 25 years and have a team of experts with the experience and training to renovate your basement. You can check out past customer reviews, project photos, offers and other information on our website or our Facebook page.



## 4 Different **Types** of Basements

While many states like Texas, California or Florida do not have basements, many Northern states like Illinois, Missouri or Ohio do have them. However, did you know that not all basements are the same? Sure, they have the commonality of typically being unfinished, but there are four different types of underground dwellings. Learn about the four types of basements here.

### **Crawlspace**

A crawlspace is not a full basement. Instead, it may be part of a basement or just a small area that you have under your home. Typically, crawlspaces are about 3-ft high and hold utility components. This space is accessible through a small door or hatch. Many homeowners use this space as a storage area due to its size.

### **Cellar**

Cellars are underground rooms that are cold enough to house produce, wines and preserved foods. Unlike crawlspaces, cellars have ample amounts of standing room for people to easily come in and out of. Many homeowners will either keep it as a storage space or finish it to become a living space. They can be full, covering the entire footprint of the house, or partial, covering only a portion of the home. Foundation revisions may be necessary if homeowners choose to extend the cellar out.

## Daylight

Unlike cellars, daylight or lookout basements are half underground and half above ground. The above-ground section of the basement usually includes a small under to let natural light and air in and out. Daylight basements stretch across the entirety of the home, effectively doubling the living space when finished. When finishing a daylight basement, you will need to have a full remodel with electricity, plumbing, flooring, drywall, etc. since most of these spaces have concrete walls and floors.

## Walkout

The last type of basement on our list is a walkout basement. A walkout basement has a door to the outside on the lower level, though there may be stairs leading up to the exit. These basements can either sit on ground level or partially underground like daylight basements. They typically have full-size windows that can open and close freely. A walkout basement adds square footage to a home, providing additional space for bedrooms, bathrooms, living areas, or even a mother-in-law suite. Adding a walkout basement is complicated. Home improvement professionals have to lift the entire structure and alter the foundation to complete this project. That is why many houses on a slope will have walkout basements instead of the other three options.





# The **Do's** and **Don'ts** to Finishing Your Basement

Finishing your basement is one of the most requested renovation projects that homeowners ask for. And who can blame them? Who doesn't like having a basement that matches their wants and needs? Now that you have decided that it is time for you to update this area, we want to make sure you have the correct information. That is why you need to check out these dos and don'ts of finishing your basement.

## **Do Start With a Plan**

There is so much potential that comes with finishing your basement. If you do not come up with a plan, you may find yourself getting confused, spending more money or never finishing your basement. Before even hiring a contractor, you should have a good idea of what you want to turn your basement into — living space, gym, entertainment room, etc. Once you know what you want to turn it into, you can then work with a contractor and a designer to get the plan started.

## **Don't Underestimate the Construction**

Finishing a basement differs from many other projects because you're starting from the ground up. While this gives you more freedom to design the room as you see appropriate, it also means you'll have to put in more effort, in the beginning, to keep it warm and dry. Unless you have a strong history in construction, we strongly advise you to hire a contractor. It's better to leave shoring up any foundation fractures and framing around your existing ducting to the professionals. Nobody wants their hard work to be ruined by a stray downpour or freezing temps. Make sure the staff you select has the skills to carry out your distinct vision before you sign any contracts. Choose someone familiar with your municipality's permitting and zoning rules, and, if possible, hire specialists to perform any plumbing or electrical work.

### **Do Have a Budget**

Just like every other remodel project you do, you need to have a budget. If you do not have a budget, you may be spending way more than you were wanting or you can afford. If you do not have enough money, there are many ways you can get the additional funds. You can get a loan or even refinance your home. Or, you can work with a contract that has exclusive deals and a financing plan.

### **Don't Be Afraid to Express Yourself**

A basement is a place in the house where you can have a great time. Allow your creativity to go wild and design a location that you and your family will love for years.

### **Do Add Lighting**

In most basements, there isn't much natural light. Examine current illumination and consider how you can make the most of it in the new space. After that, add more lighting. We suggest having multiple lighting fixtures as well as lamps in the space.

### **Don't Ignore Water Damage**

Water problems can be indicated by calcium calcification patches or a fractured foundation on the concrete floor. Before you start remodeling, contact someone who can completely dry out your basement, or hire a foundation specialist to help you figure out what you need to do. Don't let a faulty sump pump derail your renovation.

### **Do Add a Bedroom**

Even though your basement may have rooms, they are not considered bedrooms unless there is a closet. By building a closet in the room, you intend to utilize as an office in the basement, you may help yourself down the line when you sell the home. Building a \$200 closet can add \$5,000 to \$6,000 to the selling price because you can add a bedroom to your listing.

### **Don't Do it Alone**

It may be too risky to start on a large remodeling project if you have no experience with power equipment. Plus, if you don't have the necessary experience, you shouldn't attempt electrical or plumbing repairs. Hire an expert with references, as well as one who is licensed and insured. A licensed contractor running your job will pay for itself in time, money and peace of mind. And luckily, you do not have to look far for the top stress-free basement finisher in the area — Valor Home Services. Our skilled team of experts can help you plan and get your remodeling project done.





## ABOUT VALOR HOME SERVICES

At Valor Home Services, we change how you shop for your basement finishing needs. Instead of wasting your time going to one brick-and-mortar store after another, we bring the store to you. Our mobile showroom has samples ranging from flooring, fixtures, faucets and more.

By eliminating the need to travel from store to store to get the best deals and variety, we save you time and money by bringing it all to your doorstep. And then, if you need bathroom remodeling, kitchen remodeling, basement finishing, flooring, hardwood floor refinishing or other small projects taken care of, too, we can provide a stress-free remodeling or renovation experience with one of our skilled experts.

With our quick, expert renovation and helpful, knowledgeable staff, we make it easy for you to get the right bathroom at the right price. Guaranteed.

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