

# SRES<sup>®</sup> MARKETPLACE

## CONSUMER NEWSLETTER

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By Elyse Umlauf-Garneau

### Homeowners Seek Calm, Relaxation when Renovating Bathrooms

Homeowners who are renovating or have renovated their bathroom are creating spaces that bring them relaxation and serenity, says the 2021 U.S. Houzz Bathroom Trends Study (<https://bit.ly/3BVlyo6>).

Researchers found that 41% of homeowners say they use their renovated bathroom for rest and relaxation, with 61% of respondents reporting that they relax in their renovated bathroom by soaking in the tub and 54% saying they unwind with long showers.

The Houzz study shines a light on what's trending and provides insight for your own bathroom upgrade.

Eighty-eight percent changed their bathroom's style when they renovated.

Premium features, including soaking tubs and space for two and silent whirlpool baths (68, 19, and nine percent, respectively), contribute to a spa-like ambiance. So are premium shower upgrades like rainfall showerheads, dual showers, body sprayers, and thermostatic mixers (55, 23, 16, and 13 percent, respectively).

Adding dimmable lighting and greenery were other ways homeowners created a calming environment.

In addition, 68% percent said cleanliness (68%) and a lack of clutter (63%) also contribute to a spa-like atmosphere. That, Houzz researchers say, may be why modern, transitional, and contemporary styles, with their sleek lines and smooth surfaces, are so popular for bathroom renovations.

Some were motivated by addressing aging issues when making bathroom upgrades. Accommodating special needs was a driver of bathroom renovations, with 54% (up from 48% in 2018) of respondents saying the renovation addresses a household member's need.

Aging household members are the top priority both for current (27%) and future (39%) needs.

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Nearly three-quarters of renovators (71%) reported that those special needs had developed one to two years before the renovation, 48% are preparing for the near term, and 48% expect special needs to arise for household members within the next five years.

Many made major changes to their bathrooms, with 42% saying they changed the layout, 40% changing walls, and 21% increasing the size of the room either somewhat or significantly.

As for aesthetics, the color white is a clear winner. It was the most picked color for countertops, vanities, and for both shower and non-shower walls.

Still, people introduced pops of color, with 27% choosing wood for their vanities and 8% picking blue. For accent walls, 19% opted for gray, 17% for blue, and 13% went with multicolored.

More and more, renovators are leaning on professionals (84%) for help and advice. For instance, almost half (49%) hired a general contractor, up six points from the previous year.

They also hired included bathroom remodelers (22%), bathroom designers (14%), and interior designers (11%).

## **Protect yourself during Cybersecurity Awareness Month**

Nearly every week, you can find news stories about people having their identities stolen, towns losing millions to scammers, and cybersecurity breaches compromising the personal information of clients, patients, and customers at companies, hospitals, and retailers. Scammers have gotten increasingly clever and have developed new ways to separate you from your money with schemes related to reverse mortgages, grandkids, prescription drugs, and anti-aging products.

The October Cybersecurity Awareness Month is a good time to take stock of how well you've protected yourself, familiarize yourself with the latest online dangers, and review your accounts to lock down your privacy settings.

The FBI offers six recommendations. For detailed explanations of each point, see (<https://bit.ly/3IRf11H>).

1. Keep your firewall turned on
2. Install or update your antivirus software
3. Install or update your antispysware technology
4. Keep your operating system up to date
5. Be careful what you download
6. Turn off your computer

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It's always smart to review cybersecurity basics and take steps to address the areas where you're most vulnerable.

Here are some resources to get you started.

- National Cybersecurity Alliance (<https://bit.ly/3n7iv63>)
- Online Safety Tips for Older Adults (<https://bit.ly/30rhDI9>)
- Privacy Tips for Older Adults (<https://bit.ly/3n3hJaa>)
- Tips for Safe Online Holiday Shopping (<https://bit.ly/2Z91Ua5>)

*Find more details about cybersecurity on the SRES blog.*

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