

YOUR GUIDE TO A
**Successful Basement
Remodel**



A basement can be an incredibly useful, versatile space in a home. In many cases, homes are purchased with the basement unfinished, meaning the new owner has a blank canvas and an opportunity to create a customized area that perfectly suits the needs of the family.

However, that's not always the case. Your basement might already be finished but isn't serving your needs. Or, there may be functional problems that prevent you from using the basement to its full capacity. Whatever the issues may be, a basement remodeling project is one of the best things you can do to extract maximum value from your home.

This guide is going to present a start-to-finish look at the basement remodeling process. A job of this scope and scale can be intimidating at first, especially if you have never had this type of work done to your home. However, with some careful planning and the right team on your side, the journey can be a smooth one and you can look forward to outstanding results in the near future.



| It All Starts with a Strong Foundation

At the risk of stating the obvious, the foundation under your house is one of the most important components of the whole structure. Without a stable, sturdy foundation, everything else will always be at risk of failure.

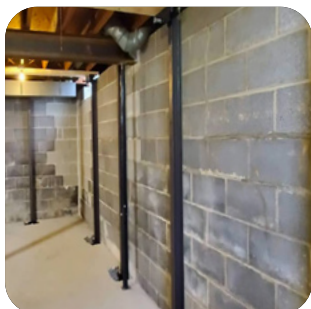
Older homes are particularly at risk of having foundation issues, so if you are remodeling a basement in a house that was built decades ago, starting this project with **foundation repair** may be required. Also, while modern homes typically have solid, reliable foundations, nothing is perfect and the foundations in these homes should at least be inspected before a remodel to make sure no repairs are required.

There are a number of different issues that can arise in a basement, including the following:



Cracks

This is probably the issue you think of first, as small cracks in basement walls are relatively common. With that said, they shouldn't be overlooked, as these kinds of cracks can allow water into the space, and they are likely to expand with time. A cracked foundation is not a stable foundation, so any of these kinds of issues should be addressed before the remodeling project proceeds.



Leaning Walls

There is constant pressure exerted on the foundation walls by the soil that surrounds the house, and in some cases, that pressure will cause the walls to lean in. When that happens, the safety of the home and those inside of it is compromised. This is a serious situation that demands a proper fix before moving forward.



Settling

Have you noticed that some of the doors in your home don't close quite right? Or maybe the floors in some of your rooms don't feel like they are level anymore? These issues can come from the settling of the foundation, which is a relatively common problem in older homes. Sometimes, foundation settling only leads to minor frustrations (like those doors that won't close), but more serious issues can arise, as well.

Think of your basement remodeling project as an opportunity to address foundation problems that should have been corrected anyway. By checking of these repairs before you get started with the actual remodeling, you'll be able to rest easy and know that your home is on firm footing for the long run.

| The Key: Keeping Water Out

Without a doubt, it's water that poses the greatest threat to the health of your basement over the long run. It would be a shame – and an expensive problem – if your newly remodeled basement was damaged by a leak that could have been addressed in advance.

Basement waterproofing is something that you should strongly consider before proceeding with your remodel. The waterproofing process will remove access points for moisture, and it can include systems to properly deal with any water that does get in. Summit Basement Company customizes our waterproofing work to the needs of each specific basement, using a collection of techniques that includes the following:

Basement Drain Systems

Adding a drain system around the perimeter of the basement will provide any water that gets in with an easy path to get back out of the basement as quickly as possible. Problems like mold and rot can develop when water lingers, so good drainage is an excellent starting point.

Exterior Draining

Keeping water from entering the basement in the first place is an even better goal, and for that, improving the exterior drainage in the soil around the house will go a long way. Quality exterior draining will keep water from pooling up near the house's foundation when it rains, so there is less of a chance for leaks to develop.

Sump Pump

For basement spaces that tend to accumulate water during certain times of the year, adding a sump pump might be a necessary step to automatically move the water out of the basement when it reaches a given level.

Summit Basement Company is able to deliver such consistent results for our clients because of the attentive, custom approach we take to each job. We'll discuss your basement's needs with you, get to understand the situation, and put together a plan that will keep it dry and ready for the upcoming remodel.





| Developing a Construction Plan

Between addressing any foundation issues and working on basement waterproofing, your space will now be in great condition to accept a remodel and become a useful, enjoyable part of the home.

It's at this point where the project starts to get a little more exciting, as you'll work on designing the basement and laying out the features that you want it to include. You may also want to partner up with a contractor at this point who can take the lead on the job and start to guide it toward a successful conclusion.

While the possibilities for a basement remodeling plan are virtually endless, there are a few points that you should keep in mind:

Start with a Clear Budget

With any kind of home project, everything starts with a budget. You need to know exactly how much you can afford to spend on this job before you can start to put the pieces into place. Failing to budget from the start could put you into a position where you finish half of the job and can't afford to finish the rest. Avoid that outcome by starting with a clear budget and working back from there.

Create a Flexible Design

It's easy to get a little carried away in terms of the purpose you have in mind for the basement space and wind up with a design that can't transition easily into something else. For example, you might plan on using your basement as a gym after the remodel, and that's great – but what if your needs change in the future? Aim for a design that is flexible enough for you to easily change the function of the space down the line.

Address Permitting Issues

The permit approval process is typically the most frustrating part of any remodeling job, and basements are no exception. While you can't get around this legal red tape, you can cut down on your stress level by applying for permits as early as possible to put time on your side.

| Navigating the Main Construction Phase

Once you have a detailed plan in place and all of your permits are approved, you can dive in and get to work on bringing this project to life. Depending on what you plan to create in the basement, some of the construction phases that might be necessary include demolition of existing features, framing out new walls, adding plumbing and electrical, and more.

To manage this project, you have a couple of options. One option is to serve as your own General Contractor and hire a variety of sub-contractors to complete the different tasks on the agenda. For instance, you could hire an electrician, plumber, HVAC contractor, and other specialists to bring it all together. This approach will require more of your time and attention, but you could save money going this route.

On the other hand, you might choose to hire a General Contractor who can be responsible for the whole project. This could be a company that already has professionals in the various trades as part of their staff, or the GC you hire may then go out to hire the sub-contractors. Whatever the case, you will invest more money this way in return for having an experienced professional oversee the whole job.



| Adding the Right Finishing Touches

Now is when things really start to get exciting. The shape of your new basement is in place and all that is left are a few finishing touches before the job is officially finished. Depending on your level of DIY skill, you might choose to take on a few of these finishing tasks after the more significant construction work has been completed.

Painting

Interior painting is a task that is within the reach of most homeowners, and doing it yourself can save you significantly over hiring painters. Consider opting for lighter tones to brighten up a basement that might be rather dark otherwise.

Adding Furniture

This step will depend entirely on what you plan to do with the newly-finished basement. If you'll be using the basement as a gym, as in our previous example, you'll need to move some workout equipment down into the space. Whatever you will be bringing down, carefully review the dimensions of those pieces to make sure they can fit through the access door and down the stairs.

Personal Touches

Even a new basement can feel kind of cold and impersonal without adding a few touches that truly make it your own. Consider adding some pictures or other artwork to the walls to bring it to life, or any other decorations that have personal significance and will make the area feel more comfortable for you and your family.

| Ongoing Basement Maintenance

There will be a well-deserved sense of satisfaction associated with finishing up your basement project and seeing the completed product for yourself. Take a moment to soak it in and be sure to use the new space as often as possible.

Looking ahead, remember that your basement needs to be cared for to make sure it stays as nice as it was on the day the remodeling was wrapped up. If you took your time to go through some of the suggested prep steps like waterproofing and foundation repair, you won't have much to worry about – but it's still a good idea to keep a watchful eye out for any changes.

Pay attention to the condition of the foundation and act quickly if any cracks appear or things seem like they are moving out of line. And, if you notice any problems in the house above, consider bringing in a professional to make sure nothing is going wrong in the basement to cause those issues.



| Contact Summit Basement Company Today

It should be clear from this guide that the initial stages of a basement remodeling project are the most important. If you get things right from the beginning – including steps like foundation repair and waterproofing – everything else is likely to go smoothly.

To put the right team on your side for basement waterproofing, foundation repair, and other critical projects, Summit Basement Company should be your first call. We are proud to offer free estimates on all projects, and our work is backed by a lifetime transferable warranty. Take a moment today to **get in touch** and let's get your basement remodel off to a great start!