

STRESS-LESS SMART MONEY STRATEGIES TO KEEP YOUR DESIGN PROJECT ON TARGET

Every design lover loves the “pretty part of design” first. But smart design lovers know and use Smart Money Strategies to gain a feeling of control in their decorating, design or renovation project as well as to reduce stress. These same Smart Money Strategies keep beautiful projects beautiful, but also on target and on track! Follow this 10 Top Checklist:

- ☐ Determine a budget RANGE vs. a specific (more realistic) dollar amount.
- ☐ Increase your budget projection by 15% (most non-designers under-guesstimate costs).
- ☐ Create a line-by-line itemized purchasing list in order to create a specific project budget.
- ☐ Create a line-item BUDGET based upon your purchase list BEFORE doing any design.
 - Research all items for purchase yourself
 - Hire a designer to research a realistic itemized budget for you
- ☐ As you shop, track each item budget allowance before initiating to see if you need to make up ground elsewhere or can splurge a bit more on another item.
- ☐ Remember to leave room in the budget for the invisible costs beyond labor: Sales Tax, Shipping/Freight, Delivery/Handling
- ☐ Open a separate bank account containing the project funds (this will minimize stress when invoices come in. The dollars are already set aside and won't affect the household).
- ☐ Designate 1 single charge card to be used only for the project to better track purchasing.
 - Open a card with special perks – airline miles, rewards programs
 - Do not carry a balance on decorative purchases
- ☐ Use borrowed dollars ONLY if your project increases home value; don't leverage decorating purchases.

Meet with a knowledgeable realtor BEFORE doing renovation/construction to determine if the investment makes sense on paper.