

WeExplain: Restoration vs. Renovation

Over time, all homes require maintenance work. Depending on its history of care though, certain homes might require significant work. These homes are often listed as “fixer” properties. Depending on the age, style and location of the home, you might consider a restoration project instead of renovating the property. After all, that 1950s vintage avocado green oven might look wonderful in a Mid-Century Modern restoration project, but amiss in a Western Ranch Property.

So, what kind of project should you tackle? First, let’s understand your options.

Restoration vs Renovation - What’s the Difference?

Restoring a property means to bring it back to its glory days. The restoration carefully removes the evidence of changes made throughout the years by using materials, colors and finishes which were common to the original era. This can mean removing entire additions, if they are inconsistent with the architectural style of the time.

Renovation is a replacement process. In a renovation project you remove the old fixtures, floors, styling and replace them with modern trends. While this does not mean a disregard for the building and its lines, it often takes an older structure and develops it into a home more in tune with current new construction trends.

RESTORATION

Examples

Refinishing the floor to its original color and finish

Replacing or repairing doors and windows

Restoring cabinets, fireplaces and carpentry to original condition

Removing additions to the home inconsistent with the era of the building

Removing exterior siding to reveal the original building

RENOVATION

Examples

Replacing the entire kitchen or bathroom with new cabinets and appliances

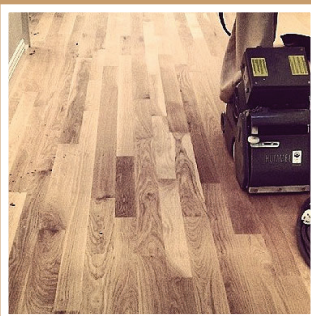
Replacing flooring with modern options

Replacing doors and windows with contemporary options

Building add-on space to kitchens, family rooms and master bedrooms

Remove and restore are key words used in restoration projects. The challenge can be finding the older materials to use in the project. Restorers often search online for vintage fixtures, appliances and other materials. The goal is to bring the home back to its historically-accurate condition as much as possible.

Replacing the existing style is what designates a renovation project. Homes are made over with the latest trends in materials, color and design. Often the more extensive projects include changing the layout itself.



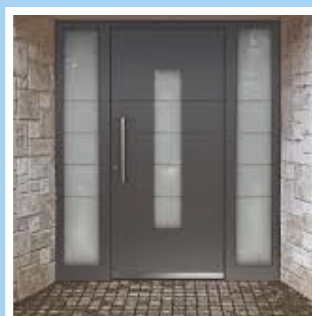
Restore
Original Floors



Restore
Antique Front Door



Replace
New Flooring



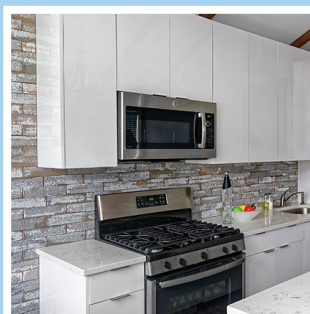
Replace
Modern Front Door



Restore
Vintage Fireplace



Restore
Original Exterior



Replace
Interior Fixtures



Replace
New Additions

In most cases, homeowners find a balance between the two options. There are many modern materials available which mimic the look and feel of traditional styles. These offer increased durability and add a modern sheen to the feel of the home. Everything from vintage-styled appliances to faux wood floors can be nice ways to acknowledge the history of a building and still have great functionality.

Mixing old with new should be done carefully, so that the property retains a sense of harmony. Restoration is normally more expensive than renovation, however, the long term gain could be much greater if the circumstances are right. Some cities and states even offer help for restoring certain homes in the form of grants and tax breaks. As you determine which kind of project you plan to undertake, **do your research on the property and get expert advice.** Once you understand the history of your property, you can decide if it needs to be restored or renovated.