

Staying a happy couple during a home reno

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(HealthDay)—Spending to make your home nicer, safer and more efficient can save you money in the long run, but it could cause stress in your relationship in the here-and-now.

In a survey done by the home design site Houzz, 46 percent of couples found that remodeling could lead to frustrating problems, and 12 percent were driven to consider a separation or divorce during the process.

Marriage therapists say that "remodeling [stress](#)" is a real issue with difficulties at every stage of a project, for reasons ranging from spiraling costs to stress from the disruption in your [living conditions](#).

What's more, any tension stemming from a home improvement project can exacerbate problems that already existed within the relationship.

For a low-stress renovation, your first step should be agreeing on a budget, including a contingency amount to cover unexpected costs, which almost always come up.

Also, make sure you share the same overall vision, even if you each put different "must-haves" on your [wish lists](#). Each partner should have input on the creative choices, too, so that no matter whose opinion prevails, both feel their views were aired and considered.

And even if you hire a general contractor, agree on your division of labor—decide who will be steering the [project](#) and how decisions will be made. Therapists suggest that even more pre-planning is needed for do-it-yourselfers because tensions can run high when all the work pressure is on just the two of you.

There are sure to be bumps in the road to [home](#) improvement, but these steps should help you navigate them more smoothly.

More information: The website Realtor.com details [six specific renovation jobs](#) that can be especially problematic and should be approached with extra care.

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