



When you invest in an [older house](#), you invest in history. An older home has [character](#) and [galore](#) stories to tell. However, just like humans, an older house may have developed some problems with its advanced age. Whether it's an update to the heating and cooling system or a renovated modern kitchen, there are likely multiple big projects that come with the purchase.

If you're going to purchase an older house, you need to be acquainted with some truths:

- An older house isn't going to have the creature comforts of a home built in the 21st century. You're going to have to embrace its unique quirks.
- [Water damage](#) is very, very dangerous. Assess and address it immediately.
- You're going to get to know your contractor very well, so pick one you are comfortable working with on a regular basis.
- The smaller the house, the more manageable. Considering we can all do to [live with less](#), buying an older home can be the perfect excuse for downsizing.
- Resale value is important. Be mindful of the [location](#).

Renovating an Older Home: Where to Start

The most important renovations you should begin with are the roof, windows, and masonry. If you're lucky, the seller replaced the roof before you bought the home; after all, installing a new

roof has one of the best [returns on investment](#) for homeowners. A new roof is important, so it's often worth it to bring it onto the negotiation table before you finalize your sale. You can either have the owner update it before you move in or negotiate the cost of a [new roof](#) out of your bid.

Windows are an important renovation for an old house because newer models can seriously boost your home's energy efficiency -- something older homes tend to struggle with. Heat gain and heat loss through windows are responsible for [25 to 30 percent](#) of residential heating and cooling energy use. Start looking at energy-efficient windows as soon as possible, and talk with your contractor about installation because it's [not exactly](#) a project to DIY.

If there are flaws in your home's structural masonry, that is obviously something you want to address right away. An unsound home is dangerous for you and your family. On the other hand, [masonry projects](#) that are purely cosmetic are not as imperative. While still a fun way to add a personal touch to an older house, they should take a backseat to other projects such as updating your heating and cooling system, which can range from [\\$3,500 to \\$7,525](#).

Renovation Tips for Homeowners

If you bought an older home, chances are you have antiques and original furnishings that reflect your good taste. Major renovations can be messy and you don't want dust, paint, or residue from building materials soiling your belongings. Consider renting a self-storage unit in your area to hold your furnishings while you work. It shouldn't eat too much into your remodeling budget -- the overall average price of a storage unit in Charlotte, North Carolina runs around [\\$77.43](#) based on data from the past few months. And before you move those items back in, consider having a professional service give your house a top-to-bottom cleaning; according to Tidy, prices for a typical house cleaning run between [\\$75 and \\$99](#) depending on the size.

If you're dying to DIY some projects, don't embark on anything without advising your contractor

first. For instance, you may think you can tear down a wall yourself, but if it's load-bearing, that will result in a huge structural problem that they'll have to address. When you're just starting out, stick with safer [renovation](#) projects such as painting, replacing doors, and adding storage.

When you buy an older house, you buy history. However, you also buy a lot of quirks and features that need updating. When it comes to renovating an older house, the right contractor can make all the difference. Have one picked out before you purchase a property so you can get a good idea about how much work you'll need to put into the home.