Chicago Bathroom Remodeling Pros

Educational Resources for Chicago Homeowners
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Bathroom Vanity Buyer's Guide

Everything You Need to Know Before Choosing a Bathroom Vanity

Your bathroom vanity is much more than a cabinet with a sink. It serves as the centerpiece of your bathroom, providing valuable storage, countertop space, organization, and defining much of the room's overall style. Selecting the right vanity involves balancing aesthetics, functionality, available space, and your budget.

This guide will help you understand the different vanity styles, sizes, countertop materials, sink options, and storage features available so you can confidently choose the best vanity for your bathroom remodeling project.

Step 1 – Determine How the Bathroom Is Used

Before shopping for a vanity, consider how the bathroom functions every day.

Questions to Ask Yourself

✔Who uses this bathroom?

✔Is it a primary bathroom?

✔Is it a guest bathroom?

✔Is it a children's bathroom?

✔Is storage a priority?

✔Will more than one person use the vanity at the same time?

✔Do you need additional countertop space?

Your answers will help determine the size, configuration, and features that best suit your needs.

Step 2 – Measure Your Available Space

Accurate measurements prevent costly mistakes.

Measure:

- Bathroom width
- Bathroom depth

- Door swing clearance
- Toilet clearance
- Shower door clearance
- Window locations
- Existing plumbing location
- Electrical outlets
- Ceiling height

Also consider how drawers and cabinet doors will open without interfering with other fixtures.

Step 3 – Choose the Right Vanity Size

Common Vanity Widths

Vanity Width	Best For
24”	Powder Rooms
30”	Small Bathrooms
36”	Guest Bathrooms
42”	Medium Bathrooms
48”	Primary Bathrooms
60”	Double Sink Option
72”	Large Primary Bathrooms
84”+	Luxury Bathrooms

Choose the largest vanity your space comfortably allows without making the room feel crowded.

Step 4 – Select a Vanity Style

Freestanding Vanity

Most popular option.

Benefits:

- Easy installation
- Wide variety of styles
- Excellent storage
- Budget-friendly

Floating Vanity

Wall-mounted cabinetry that creates an open appearance.

Benefits:

- Makes bathrooms appear larger
- Easier floor cleaning
- Contemporary design

- Adjustable installation height

Best for:

- Modern bathrooms
- Small bathrooms
- Luxury remodels

Furniture-Style Vanity

Designed to resemble fine furniture.

Benefits:

- Elegant appearance
- Decorative legs
- Unique styling
- Luxury appeal

Custom Vanity

Built specifically for your bathroom.

Benefits:

- Maximum storage
- Personalized design
- Premium craftsmanship
- Perfect fit

Best for:

- Luxury remodels
- Unusual layouts
- High-end homes

Step 5 – Single vs. Double Vanity

Single Vanity

Advantages

✔Lower cost

✔More floor space

✔Easier installation

✔Excellent for guest bathrooms

✓ Ideal for smaller bathrooms

Double Vanity

Advantages

✔Two sinks

✔More storage

✔Larger countertop

✔Better for couples

✔Improved morning routines

✔Excellent resale appeal

Requires additional wall space but significantly improves functionality in many primary bathrooms.

Step 6 – Choose Your Countertop

Quartz

Advantages

✔No sealing required

✔Stain resistant

✔Low maintenance

✔Consistent appearance

✔Wide color selection

Excellent for busy households.

Granite

Advantages

✔Natural stone

✔Unique patterns

✔Exceptional durability

✔Timeless appearance

Requires periodic sealing.

Marble

Advantages

✔Luxury appearance

✔Elegant veining

✔Premium material

Best suited for homeowners comfortable with additional maintenance.

Solid Surface

Advantages

✔Seamless appearance

✔Easy maintenance

✓ Affordable luxury

Step 7 – Select a Sink Style

Undermount Sink

Most popular choice.

Benefits

- Easy countertop cleaning
- Modern appearance
- Maximizes countertop spac

Vessel Sink

Installed above the countertop.

Benefits

- Decorative focal point
- Contemporary styling
- Unique appearance

Integrated Sink

Countertop and sink molded together.

Benefits

- Seamless appearance
- Easy cleaning
- Minimal maintenance

Drop-In Sink

Traditional option.

Benefits

- Affordable
- Easy replacement

- Wide selection

Step 8 – Choose Cabinet Material

Quality cabinetry contributes to long-term durability.

Common materials include:

- Solid hardwood
- Furniture-grade plywood
- MDF with durable finishes
- Veneered wood
- Moisture-resistant engineered panels

Avoid inexpensive particleboard cabinets in high-moisture environments whenever possible.

Step 9 – Storage Features

Today's vanities offer much more than shelves.

Popular storage upgrades include:

✔Soft-close drawers

✔Full-extension drawer slides

✔Deep storage drawers

✔Pull-out organizers

✔Built-in electrical outlets

✔Hair dryer holders

✔Makeup organizers

✔Tilt-out trays

✔Hidden storage compartments

✔Adjustable shelving

Choose storage features based on your daily routine rather than appearance alone.

Step 10 – Select Hardware & Finish

Popular cabinet finishes include:

- White
- Warm White
- Natural Oak
- Walnut
- Espresso

- Gray
- Black
- Navy Blue
- Sage Green

Popular hardware finishes include:

- Matte Black
- Brushed Nickel
- Chrome
- Brushed Brass
- Satin Bronze

Coordinate cabinet hardware with faucets, shower fixtures, towel bars, and lighting for a cohesive design.

Step 11 – Choose Your Faucet

Common faucet styles include:

- Single-handle
- Widespread
- Wall-mounted
- Centerset
- Touchless

Popular finishes include:

- Chrome
- Matte Black
- Brushed Nickel
- Brushed Brass

WaterSense® faucets can help reduce water consumption while maintaining strong performance.

Step 12 – Mirror & Lighting

Your vanity isn’t complete without proper lighting.

Popular mirror options:

- Framed mirrors
- Frameless mirrors
- Backlit mirrors
- Medicine cabinets
- LED mirrors

Lighting options include:

- Vanity lights
- Wall sconces
- Recessed lighting
- Pendant lights
- Dimmable LED fixtures

A layered lighting plan improves visibility and creates a more welcoming atmosphere.

Current Vanity Design Trends

Many Chicago homeowners are choosing:

- Floating vanities
- Natural wood finishes
- Quartz countertops
- Oversized drawers
- Matte Black hardware
- Backlit mirrors
- Wall-mounted faucets
- Large-format porcelain tile
- Integrated storage
- Minimalist cabinetry

These trends combine timeless design with practical functionality

Budget Planning

Vanity Type	Typical Investment
Stock Vanity	$500–$1,200
Semi-Custom Vanity	$1,200–$3,000
Custom Vanity	$3,000–$8,000+

Countertops

Material	Typical Investment
Laminate	$300–$800
Solid Surface	$700–$2,000
Quartz	$900–$2,500
Granite	$1,000–$3,000
Marble	$1,500–$4,000+

Installation costs vary depending on plumbing modifications, countertop fabrication, and the complexity of the project.

Questions to Ask Before Buying

□ How much storage do I need?

□ Do I want one sink or two?

□ What countertop material best fits my lifestyle?

□ Which cabinet style complements my home?

□ Is maintenance important?

□ Will this vanity still meet my needs in ten years?

□ Does it coordinate with my flooring and tile?

□ Is the height comfortable?

□ Are replacement parts readily available?

□ Does it fit my remodeling budget?

Common Vanity Buying Mistakes

Avoid these common errors:

- Choosing style over storage
- Buying a vanity that’s too large for the room
- Ignoring door and drawer clearance
- Forgetting plumbing locations
- Choosing trendy finishes without considering longevity
- Purchasing low-quality cabinetry
- Underestimating lighting needs
- Failing to coordinate finishes
- Not planning for future storage needs

Our Recommendation

For most Chicago homeowners, we recommend:

- Quartz countertops
- Solid wood or plywood cabinetry
- Soft-close drawers
- Undermount sinks
- Floating or furniture-style vanities (where appropriate)
- LED vanity lighting
- Matte Black or Brushed Nickel hardware
- Ample drawer storage
- Moisture-resistant construction

This combination offers an excellent balance of durability, appearance, functionality, and long-term value.

Chicago Bathroom Remodeling Pros

Choosing the right vanity is one of the most important decisions you'll make during your bathroom remodel. Our experienced team helps homeowners throughout Chicago compare styles, cabinetry, countertops, sinks, storage options, and finishes to create vanities that are both beautiful and practical. Whether you're updating a powder room or designing a luxury primary bathroom, we're committed to helping you select a vanity that enhances your home's value and your everyday comfort for years to come.

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