



30 WAYS TO SAVE MONEY ON YOUR PROJECT

threebirds[®]
RENOVATIONS

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By Three Birds Renovations

We've all been there ... you 'pin' an amazing interior designer look on your Pinterest board, then show friends and family what your reno is going to look like only to be brought crashing down to earth once you find out how much it's going to cost to get that look! So many of us have Champagne taste on a beer budget! What's up with that?

Fear not! You can still achieve the home of your dreams at a fraction of the price. #itstotespossible We've done the hard yards to find the best ways to bust that budget and end up with an amazing home. #beentheredonethat

*Without further
ado, we give you
30 easy ways you
can save money...*

1. SPRAY YOUR EXTERIOR BRICKS

If you're renovating a brick house, you might assume that you need to render it to get the look you're after—but that can cost a packet. We've found one of the best ways to transform an ugly brick exterior is by spraying the bricks using a quality exterior paint. This is much cheaper than render and can be completed in 1–2 days by a professional. Oh, and did we happen to mention that sprayed bricks also look great? One of our sprayed-brick properties even made the front cover of a glossy magazine! But, if you've got your heart set on that rendered look, consider rendering just the front façade and spraying the sides and back of the house. We've done it that way before too.

2. SAVE ON YOUR FRENCH DOORS

Alfresco living is growing in popularity, but instead of spending thousands on bi-fold doors, opt for off-the-shelf French doors instead. Paint them white and you've got that Hamptons look for half the price.



3. PICK UP A FLAT-PACK KITCHEN

Who doesn't love a custom-made cabinet? People on a tight budget, that's who! If that's you, flat-pack can be your best friend. We've installed some amazing flat-pack kitchens and laundries and saved tens of thousands of dollars in the process.

4. FAKE IT!

We love the romance of real marble and natural stone ... but we don't love the cost to buy and maintain it. If you want to save some cash but still get that beautiful aesthetic, consider engineered stone instead of marble; porcelain tiles that look like travertine or terrazzo; and concrete pavers that you'd swear are limestone.



5. CHOOSE ALUMINIUM OVER TIMBER

It's pretty simple, aluminium windows and doors will cost you less than timber. The material costs less and you won't need to pay a painter. But the barrier for us used to be their dated and dour aesthetic, however times have changed and aluminium design has come a long way in a few short years! You can now get gorgeous profiles and colours making aluminium doors and windows a smart choice for renovations and new builds.

6. SKIP THE BEDHEAD

A bed frame or fancy bedhead can set you back some serious coin. If you need to save some cash, use an ensemble of Euro pillows and artwork to create a feature in the bedroom. This is especially relevant when staging a property for sale.



7. LEAVE THE PLUMBING WHERE IT IS

It's true what people say about not moving your plumbing to save money. A bathroom, kitchen or laundry renovation will cost much less if you keep the main plumbing services where they are. Feel free to upgrade your toilet and shower by all means, but don't move their location. If you feel you must move them, the smaller the move, the cheaper the price. So, before deciding to shift your toilet from one end of the room to the other, consult your plumber and then consult your budget.

8. REUSE WHERE YOU CAN

Avoid creating new window and door openings where possible. If you can make your current windows work, do. If you need to make new openings, try to reuse current windows and doors wherever possible.

9. GET SAVVY WITH MATURE PLANTS

Mature plants can set you back budget-wise but they're such a great way to fast-track your new home into feeling finished and lived in. There's nothing worse than a garden filled with only ankle-scraping saplings. Look at online marketplaces for some mature plants that people are wanting to get rid of or look around your own property to see if there are some mature plants or trees that you could move into a more prominent spot in your landscape design.



10. RESIST THE URGE TO TILE FLOOR-CEILING

Save on materials and labour in bathrooms by tiling only 1.2 metres up from the floor (except for the shower recess) and then paint the rest of the walls. This will cut your tiling bill in half and give the bathroom a softer feel, with fewer hard surfaces.

11. WHITEWASH YOUR ORIGINAL TIMBER

Are you dreaming of white floors on a peasant's budget? Good news! You can do this job yourself OR you can pay someone to do it. Either way, if you have a decent floor hiding under some old carpet (lots of old houses have cypress pine), you can whitewash it like we did here.



12. UPCYCLE YOUR POTS

Before you purchase new pots, look for old ones lying around your garden then paint them whatever colour your vision board calls for using an exterior paint.



13. AGREE FIXED RATES WITH TRADIES

Wherever possible, we have our builder and trades commit to a fixed price for the work to be done, regardless of how many hours it's going to take. If you sign up to an hourly rate, you open yourself up to a budget blowout and there is no incentive for your builder to work in a fast and efficient manner.

14. ACCEPT A SMALL STEP UP

If you're renovating a bathroom, you'll probably be asked by your builder if you want him to lower the existing bathroom floor so the end result is flush with the adjoining room. The alternative is accepting a small step up when you enter the bathroom. In a perfect world all floors would be flush, but if money is tight, a little ramp or step is a small price to pay to avoid the costs of lowering the floor for the sake of a flush finish. You'll save yourself thousands.



This step will save you money

15. SPRAY YOUR ROOF TILES

Curb appeal is so important, and a roof can account for about 30% of what people see from the street. Spraying your roof tiles to get the colour you want can cost a fraction of laying a new roof and there are painters who specialise in doing this.



16. PAVING PAINT TO THE RESCUE

We love paving paint! It can turn an ugly, old concrete pathway or pool surrounds into a fresh footway in no time. It's super-easy to apply so you can even do it yourself. We also love using paving paint in alfresco spaces where tiling is too expensive. Just add an outdoor rug and some fresh furniture and no-one will ever notice the absence of tiles.

17. TURF YOURSELF

The garden is often the forgotten friend, which is a shame because it will probably get trashed by builders and material deliveries, and be in dire need of some new turf before you're done. If you're tight on cash, consider laying your own turf. Have your landscaper prepare the soil but then place the order and lay it yourself.

18. PLAY TETRIS WITH YOUR SKIP BIN

These bad boys cost money, so try to limit the number of skip bins you go through during your renovation. One way to do this is to pack it tight like a game of Tetris. Break up large, bulky items and try to fill up the bin, leaving minimal gaps. Remember, air pockets = wasted space = more money. And don't use your valuable skip space for things like Coke cans and leftover lunches. That's what your household bins are for. Save the skip for building waste only, and make sure you tell your trades and contractors to do the same.

19. REFRESH RATHER THAN REBUILD YOUR STAIRCASE

Before you rip out your old staircase, try refreshing it with a new coat of paint and consider some cladding. You may even be able to create a reading nook underneath it.



20. HUNT DOWN \$5 KNOBS AND HANDLES

You'd be surprised how much cabinetry knobs and handles can cost. Pick up a bulk pack from IKEA or your local hardware store for as little as \$5 and tell your cabinet maker or carpenter to use those instead.

21. DON'T CHANGE YOUR MIND

One of the single biggest ways for costs to blow out is if you change your mind mid-reno causing 'variations'. Seemingly small changes like swapping in a different tap or bath can cost you if your plumber has already 'roughed-in' for something else. The same applies to wall placements and features like built-in bench seats and picture windows. If your builder has to re-do work or do extra, he will charge you for a variation.

22. SPLIT-SYSTEM AC = A-OK

While we are big fans of ducted heating and air con, it comes at a price. A couple of split-systems throughout the house may be a more prudent choice. The ones we've installed in our reno properties have still been really effective and there are some good looking options available these days.

23. DO IT ALL AT ONCE

If you consult Google, the standard advice is to renovate in stages. Yep, this will definitely help your cash flow, but it won't allow for cost efficiencies from doing it all at once. E.g. tradies will charge you more overall if they need to keep coming back to your job rather than doing it all in one hit. And if you're hiring things like scaffolding, you only want to do that once.

24. OPEN UP WITH A WINDOW WALL

If you want to create an open-plan but have a load-bearing wall in your way, it can cost a bomb to remove because of the structural beams you'll need to hold the house up. The window wall might be your saviour. It opens things up visually at a fraction of the price.



25. SOURCE YOUR FIXTURES AND FITTINGS

Gone are the days where only builders and trades could access a huge range of tapware, tiles and appliances at great prices. With the expansion of online shopping, you can (and should) take on that responsibility yourself by finding the items you like and ordering them direct. This removes the mark-up your builder would have passed on to you, not to mention their charge for the time spent sourcing and buying them.

26. RUN YOUR OWN KITCHEN RENO

If you order your kitchen through a showroom, you're going to pay a huge premium for them to run the show. It's actually not that hard to organise your own kitchen reno, so save your pretty pennies. We teach you how in our online Three Birds Reno School.

27. GET CHEAP-AS-CHIPS WARDROBE DOORS

Cabinetry costs add up fast but you can pick up some great alternatives for around \$65 each. [Check out these IKEA doors](#) or go for a warmer rustic look by hunting down old timber louvre doors on eBay. To make sure they fit properly, have your builder construct a frame to fit the doors, not the other way around.

28. CHOOSE STANDARD TRIM PROFILES

Most builders will include standard skirting, architrave and cornice profiles in their quotes. If you upgrade to a more decorative shape or profile, you'll also be upgrading in price.

29. DITCH THE BUILT-IN BATH

This is a real win/win as far as cost and style are concerned. Freestanding baths are not only cheaper to install than built-ins (requiring less framework, waterproofing and tiling), they also look so damn sexy! And opt for an acrylic material rather than solid surface to save even further.



30. USE TIMBER IN YOUR LAUNDRY

We often use timber benchtops in laundries as a great money saver. Depending on your timber choice, counter tops can cost under \$100 and with a lick of the right oil, they can handle water.





IF YOU ENJOYED THIS LITTLE CANAPE OF RENO GOODNESS YOU WILL LOVE OUR ONLINE RENO SCHOOL.

[Three Birds Reno School](#) is an online course created by us to teach you everything we know about how to design, renovate or build your dream home. We will help you create a vision for your project, understand who you need to work with, how to handle builders, tradies and contractors, manage a budget and get what you paid for. We'll show you where to spend versus where to save and how to avoid basic mistakes that can chew up your time, money, and happy vibes.

We've built up great relationships with some of our favourite brands in the biz and they've kindly agreed to pass on discounts to you as part of our exclusive Reno School package. Check out what's on offer [here](#) and you could be well on your way to saving thousands on your reno! How easy is that?

Whether you're renovating, doing a new build or creating an amazing outdoor space, you need vision and know-how to get what you want. Three Birds Reno School can fast-track your knowledge, build your confidence and get you ready to go!

Join the thousands of students from all over the world who have already completed the course.

Are you ready to make your dream home a reality?

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**LEARN HOW TO DESIGN,
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