

bathroom

ultimate planning guide

CHOOSE THE PERFECT
BATH PRODUCTS



**STYLE
& FUNCTION**
DESIGN A BATH
THAT HAS IT ALL

EXPERT ADVICE
ON BUDGET,
PLANNING, AND
REMODELING

Need help with
your project?
Find out how
pros can help.

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DREAMING ABOUT A NEW BATH

BATH WISH LIST

Before beginning construction work, take time to assess your needs, devise an efficient layout, and determine a budget.



DETERMINE YOUR NEEDS

What do you love about your current bath?

What would you most like to change?

Describe your dream bath:

What type of feeling would you like your new bathroom space to have?

What colors do you like?

Will more than one person be using the bathroom at the same time? How often?

What bathroom activities are better done in private?

What bathroom activities can be done in a shared space?

Will this bathroom be used by visitors? How often?

Will visitors be children, adults, or both?

Do any users have physical limitations?

Do you prefer separate showering and bathing areas?

Would you like a tub that accommodates more than one person?

Would you like a shower that accommodates more than one person?

Do you prefer the water closet and/or bidet be separate from the other fixtures, placed in its own compartment?

DREAMING ABOUT A NEW BATH

BATH WISH LIST

Determine what activities you'll do in your bathroom and where you will want these activities to take place. Knowing how you'll use your bathroom will help you plan an efficient layout.

BATH ACTIVITIES

Grooming

	Yes	No	Where? (ie: vanity, tub, shower)
Washing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Shaving	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Brushing teeth/flossing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Trimming/painting nails	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Applying cosmetics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Drying/styling hair	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Skin care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
First aid	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Applying lotion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Medicines/vitamins	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____

Showering & Bathing

	Yes	No	Where? (ie: shower, tub, sink)
Washing body	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Washing hair	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Soaking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Bathing pets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Assisting an adult with bathing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____

Other Bath Activities

	Yes	No	Where?
Personal pampering	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Undressing/hamper	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Dressing: underwear/sleep clothes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Dressing: "street" clothes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Drinking beverages	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Eating snacks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Exercise without equipment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Exercise using equipment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Laundry: air dry	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Laundry: hand-wash	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Laundry: machine wash	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Laundry: sort/fold	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Listening to music	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Massage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Meditation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Polishing shoes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Reading	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Supervising children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Talking on telephone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Tanning/Sunning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Watching television	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Display collections	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Growing Plants	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Other:	_____		

STORAGE & SPACE PLANNING

Storage by Item Type

	Yes	No
Makeup	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shaving supplies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hair grooming equipment/supplies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hand/foot grooming equipment/supplies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Personal hygiene items	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Medicine/first aid	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bathroom paper products	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bath towels and washcloths	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Household bedroom linens	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Exercise equipment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pet grooming/bath supplies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cleaning supplies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shoe polishing supplies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other:	_____	

Extra Amenities

	Yes	No
Blow dryer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Curling iron	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Electric toothbrush	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Electric razor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fireplace	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Radio/music player	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Scale	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Television/DVD player	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Towel warmer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Coffee machine	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mini fridge	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Washer/dryer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other:	_____	

CHOOSING PRODUCTS

VANITIES, CABINETS & STORAGE

Start selecting cabinetry, fixtures, and materials early so you'll have time to research all the options and figure out what's right for you.



DIY TIP

Shop thrift stores or recycle furniture from other rooms to create one-of-a-kind bath storage. Convert a dresser into a custom vanity or add vintage shelves for displaying collectibles. Remember to apply a moisture-resistant sealer to prevent wood from warping.

CABINET BASICS

Like kitchen units, ready-made bath cabinets come in two basic designs. American-style framed cabinets have a face frame applied to the front of the cabinet boxes. Door hinges are often visible. European, or frameless, cabinets have no face frame. Doors cover almost all of each cabinet box, and hardware is hidden when the doors are closed. The former suggests a traditional look; the latter feels more contemporary.

Stock cabinets offer the fewest variables in materials, finishes, sizes, and details, but they're also the most affordable. Semicustom and custom cabinets increase your options—but also your cost, and typically your delivery time.

STYLE DETAILS

Exotic woods, specialty finishes, and milled details can bring a furniture look to the vanity area and upgrade your bath's overall style. Remember the decorative impact of knobs and pulls. Use this cabinet jewelry to dress up a simple style or emphasize a design theme. Match your faucet finish or not—it's up to you.

STORAGE FEATURES

When selecting a vanity, consider how you'll use it. Must it also store towels and cosmetics? Most vanities combine drawer and shelf space. Customize the capacity of stock models with wire shelves, a pullout wastebasket, towel rods, hooks, and drawer dividers.

Look for medicine cabinets with adjustable shelves, built-in electrical outlets, and a mirror defogger (if you can afford a splurge). Use cosmetic organizers to keep small items tidy. If you're remodeling, choose the same type of medicine cabinet that you're replacing (a surface-mount or recessed unit) to avoid breaking into the wall.

CHOOSING PRODUCTS

COUNTERTOPS, FLOORING & WALLS

Make sure the materials you select for bathroom walls, floors, and countertops are practical as well as stylish. It's important to consider maintenance needs and durability in this high-moisture environment.

COUNTERTOP MATERIALS

NATURAL STONE adds elegance and offers several options. Granite is durable and curling-iron proof but requires professional installation and periodic sealing to repel stains. Marble and limestone are classic and luxurious (read: higher cost) but are softer than granite so they can scratch and stain. Buying direct from a stone yard may cost more, but you'll see the exact piece you'll get.

SOLID-SURFACING countertops blend plastic, stone, or glass into a resin or cement base. Find panels in neutrals, pastels, and stone looks. Any scratches in the nonporous material can be sanded away. Matching sinks create a seamless installation.

QUARTZ-SURFACING is also called engineered stone because its mix of ground quartz, resins, and pigments forms consistent stonelike patterns. The surface is nonporous and scratch-resistant.

LAMINATE is affordable and resists water and stains, but the thin top layer can scorch and dull over time. Preformed countertop/backsplash units are easy to install and easy to clean (no seam along the wall). Longer pattern repeats help this manufactured material better mimic natural stone.

CULTURED MARBLE contains natural marble chips embedded in plastic resin. It comes in in sheet form and in standard counter depths.

CERAMIC AND PORCELAIN TILES, when glazed, repel moisture and some stains. Avoid lead-base glazes. In porcelain tile, color goes all the way through so scratches and dents are less visible. Choose larger tiles for fewer grout lines and lower maintenance.

GLASS AND GLASS-AGGREGATE counters set a glamorous, shimmering mood. Insist on tempered glass for safety and professional installation for security.

FLOORING

RESILIENT SHEET flooring is soft underfoot, durable, and moisture-resistant. Vinyl floors offer a wide range of patterns with realistic textures that mimic the look of stone and wood. Eco-friendly linoleum comes in many colors, while cork is naturally quiet and germ-resistant.

STONE adds elegance and durability, but it can be slippery when wet and often requires professional installation. Choose a honed or textured finish for slip-resistance, and opt for smaller tiles in the shower.

Try our Materials
Finder tool at
bhg.com/bathmaterials
to find perfect floors
and countertops for
your new bathroom.

HARDWOOD offers a classic beauty but must be coated with a urethane finish to protect against moisture. Or you can choose engineered wood; its fused layers add stability in humid environments.

LAMINATE flooring can be a convincing, easy-care substitute for wood, tile, or stone. Choose planks or tiles.

WALL TREATMENT OPTIONS

TILES are generally water-resistant, and if they chip, they're easy to replace. Ceramic, porcelain, and glass tiles are all offered in a wide range of colors and designs. Mixing accent tiles and field tiles can help you create a custom look. Both large-format and mosaic tiles can make a bath feel larger. Run tiles to the ceiling to emphasize height. Mosaics in glass, stone, and metal can be a DIY project if bought on a mesh backing. For durability, be sure to use only wall tile for walls and floor tile for floors. Tiles require little maintenance, but the grout may need to be resealed or redone after a few years.

PAINT is the least expensive option for walls and ceilings. Gloss and semigloss finishes work best in the bath's humid environment, but keep in mind that they'll accentuate any irregularities on the walls. Use epoxy paint if you want to cover a tile, glass, or porcelain surface.

WALLCOVERINGS need to be tough to stand up to use in this humid room. Opt for vinyl coverings (especially vinyl laminated to fabric) rather than traditional wallpaper for the best results.

MONEY-WISE

SAVE MORE: For stylish tub surrounds, select cultured marble sheets instead of ceramic tile. You'll save money on labor costs, and the marble sheets are easier to clean. Consider covering walls with inexpensive beaded-board panels for a charming cottage look.

SPEND SMART: Install radiant-heat panels or mats below tile, vinyl, and hardwood floors to keep feet warm on cold winter days. Electric versions can operate on timers and warm defined areas, such as in front of the vanity or beside the tub.

CHOOSING PRODUCTS

SINK STYLES

These basins are much more than utilitarian pieces—they can create an elegant focal point and set the tone for the bath's overall design.

1. VANITY-TOP sinks are among the most budget-friendly. Round, oval, or square bowls of porcelain, glass, ceramic, or metal can be installed in three ways:

1. Drop-in, or self-rimming, sinks simply drop into a hole slightly smaller than the sink's rim and rest on the countertop surface. The slight raised rim helps capture splashes. **2.** Undermount sinks attach below the counter surface, which is usually made of stone, quartz, or solid-surfacing material. The sink's edges—and those of the surrounding countertop—must be finished perfectly for a neat, tidy look and easy cleanup. **3.** Integral sinks are made from the same material as the countertop. Professional installers finish the seam to be invisible. They are also available at home centers.

2. CONSOLE sinks merge the function of a vanity with furniture styling. Wood or metal legs form an airy base for a countertop of wood, glass, or stone. If you don't like the look of exposed plumbing pipes, choose a console with shelves to hold stacked towels, baskets, or trays.

3. PEDESTAL sinks bring vintage character to the bathroom. These sinks occupy less space than boxy vanities, which offer more storage. Choose a model with a wide deck or a towel rail to amplify storage space. Opt for a model with a more streamlined design for an updated take on classic style.

4. ABOVE-COUNTER or VESSEL SINKS bring a sculptural presence to the vanity area. These statement sinks come in many shapes and are available in glass, ceramic, wood, or metal. The raised bowls can mean less bending and greater comfort for adults but may be difficult to use for children or people with disabilities. With the outside of the bowl exposed, you have more surface area to clean. If you opt for an above-counter sink, you may need a shorter vanity or console and a taller or wall-mount faucet. As a compromise, recess the sink partially so only some of its exterior shows above the countertop.

5. WALL-MOUNT sinks are a boon to cramped quarters. They can be installed at any height, with open space beneath for wheelchair access or freestanding storage. Most wall-mounts are porcelain, but you can use hefty brackets to support a countertop with a drop-in or vessel-style basin (be sure the brackets can bear the weight).



SINK MATERIALS

Vitreous china is inexpensive and cleans easily, but it can chip. Stone and porcelain-enameled cast iron are durable but heavy. Fiberglass-reinforced plastic is lightweight, but it can show wear. Cast polymer and cultured marble may chip. Brushed or satin-finish stainless steel hides water spots. Glass must be tempered for safety.

CHOOSING PRODUCTS

FAUCET TYPES

Bath faucets need to look great, operate smoothly, and stand up to daily abuse. Choose a style and finish that complements your bath, but pay attention to function and durability, too.

Faucet styles range from ornate Victorian designs to taps with modern, streamlined looks. Cross-shape handles offer vintage charm, while large wing levers add contemporary appeal. Two-handle models let you adjust water temperature more precisely with independent hot and cold controls, while single-handle models show off a sleek and contemporary aesthetic.

1. WIDESPREAD

These faucets have a separate spout and handles, spaced up to 10 inches apart. The valves and mixing chamber are hidden underneath the sink or counter.

2. CENTER SET

This compact style (water lines 4 inches apart) combines the spout and handles in one unit that mounts on the sink deck or behind it on the countertop.

3. SINGLE HANDLE

Only one hole pierces the sink deck or countertop, saving space and allowing easy cleanup. A top- or side-mount lever or knob controls flow and temperature.

4. BRIDGE

Ideal for undermount sinks, this nostalgic style's exposed channel links spoke-style handles and a curvy spout for installation directly on the countertop.

5. WALL-MOUNT

Plumbed through the wall behind and above the sink, this type must be installed per the manufacturer's specifications to minimize splashing. The ideal position for the water stream is just behind the sink drain.



TUB FILLERS

Today's tub fillers blend function and sophistication and complement a range of design styles. A deck mount or Roman tub filler works well with a platform tub and is simply a larger version of a lavatory faucet. Floor-mount tub fillers enhance freestanding tubs; opt for a vintage design to complement a traditional claw-foot tub. The common three-wall alcove tub usually includes a wall-mount fixture with the spout placed a little past the tub's edge. To add a touch of luxury to your tub area, choose a waterfall fixture that transforms the chore of filling the

MONEY-WISE

SAVE MORE: If your budget is limited, opt for a chrome finish. And keep in mind that a standard two-handle faucet is likely to cost less than a single handle faucet.

SPEND SMART: Look for WaterSense-labeled faucets that reduce water consumption. And choose a faucet with replaceable internal parts, so you don't have to replace the whole faucet if something breaks.

CHOOSING PRODUCTS

SHOWERHEADS & SHOWER ENCLOSURES

Combine multiple showerheads and body sprays to create a spa-like retreat. Whether you install a combination tub/shower unit or splurge on a separate shower, it's easy to integrate luxurious features that elevate your showering experience.



DIY TIP

Don't want to hire a plumber to upgrade your shower? Look for easy-to-install pre-plumbed shower panels (shown, left). These all-in-one units include multiple showerheads and body sprays in one compact unit. They can be easily retrofitted into most existing showers.

Get more shower planning ideas at bhg.com/showerplanner to create a superb bathing experience in your new bathroom!

SHOWERHEAD OPTIONS

The easiest and least expensive shower upgrade is switching out a standard showerhead with a model that offers a range of massaging spray patterns. When shopping, look for WaterSense-labeled products that use no more than 2.0 gallons of water per minute (rather than the standard 2.5 gpm). To ensure good performance with less water, look for new models that infuse air with the water to create a more voluminous spray. Also consider adding a handheld showerhead to the mix; models that slide up and down on a bar mounted to the wall can be an ideal choice for a shower that will be used by people of varying heights. For added luxury, consider installing a ceiling-mount fixture, such as an oversize rain-style showerhead.

BODY SPRAYS

If your shower space is large enough, or you're planning plumbing lines in adjacent walls, consider splurging on body sprays designed to pummel you pleasantly all over. Be sure to consult a plumber to determine how much work is involved and whether your home's water pressure can supply the expanded spray system.

DIGITAL CONTROLS

For the ultimate convenience, consider installing one of the new digital showering systems. These systems allow you to set preferences for water temperature, spray modes, and more—for multiple users. They also help save water, since they will shut off the water and hold that temperature until you get in.

SHOWER ENCLOSURES AND DOORS

Enclosures range from compact corner units to spacious shower rooms. Some prefabricated surrounds are sold as kits, which are easy to bring home and assemble inside your bathroom. Glass or translucent plastic doors help a shower feel big and bright. Choose sliding doors for tub/shower combos, swinging doors for freestanding units, and bifold or neo-angle doors for corner enclosures. Hinged shower shields partially screen a shower opening. Nearby flooring should be able to take a bit of spray.

CHOOSING PRODUCTS

BATHTUB MATERIALS & INSTALLATION

Thanks to smart materials and a variety of installation options, it's easy to create a soothing soaking spot in any bath.

TUB MATERIALS

Different tub materials offer perks that fit various price points and lifestyles. Take a look at the options and determine what will work best for you. Keep in mind, however, that not all tubs are available in all materials.

CAST-IRON tubs are among the most durable and long-lasting fixtures in the home. But these tubs are extremely heavy; even a small cast-iron tub will likely require extra floor support.

ACRYLIC has a high-gloss look that's similar to enameled cast iron but weighs much less. Acrylic is more durable and less prone to color-fade than fiberglass tubs. Repairs are much easier than those that must be made to porcelain surfaces.

FIBERGLASS tubs, also referred to as gel-coat fiberglass or fiberglass-reinforced plastic (FRP), feature a glossy, easy-to-clean surface. It's not as expensive as acrylic, but it's also not as durable and can crack if something hits it hard enough.

COMPOSITE tubs are made from an engineered material coated in enamel. They offer the heat retention of a cast-iron tub at a third of the weight—so they are ideal candidates for upper-level bathrooms.

CULTURED MARBLE is a solid-surfacing material comparable to quartz countertops that is produced from crushed marble set in resin and then covered with a clear gelcoat. Scratches can be buffed out of this material, but cracks can't be repaired.

PORCELAIN-ON-STEEL tubs offer the look and heat retention of cast iron at a lighter weight. Prices can vary, but keep in mind that you generally get what you pay for; lower-priced models tend to chip and sound echoey.

INSTALLATION METHODS

Select an installation method that works best with your space requirements to transform your tub into a stunning focal point.

ALCOVE

Commonly referred to as a recessed tub, this installation is used for rectangular tubs adjacent to three walls. If you're replacing a standard tub, take note of the drain location as you face the accessible side—this is how you determine if you need a left-hand or right-hand installation to match up with existing plumbing.



PLATFORM

Tubs made for platform installation drop into a deck structure usually built into its own enclosure, often adjacent to the shower. This method works well with whirlpools and air baths, since space below the deck can house and hide pumps, plumbing, and hardware. (Keep these parts accessible with a removable panel.)

UNDERMOUNT

The difference between a platform tub and an undermount tub is mostly a matter of aesthetics. An undermount's rim is covered with a deck top—usually stone or tile that coordinates with surrounding materials—and it's supported from underneath, rather than hanging from the deck as a platform tub does.

FREESTANDING

As the name implies, this tub stands on its own on the bathroom floor without additional support, creating a stunning focal point. This type of installation must be placed close to plumbing lines, so ask your professional if this is an option in your space.

SOAK IN SERENITY

To enhance your soaking spot, consider selecting a whirlpool, air tub, or soaking tub. A whirlpool forces water through strategically placed jets, while an air tub pushes a soothing, steady stream of air into the water. Because extra plumbing is required, whirlpools tend to be more expensive than air tubs. Extra-deep soaking tubs allow you to submerge your entire body and are available as built-in or freestanding models.

KEEP IN MIND: If you plan to add a large whirlpool tub, make sure your water heater can handle the new addition, or consider adding a water heater dedicated to the tub.

TOILET FEATURES

Look for new designs that conserve water, enhance comfort, and ease cleaning tasks.

EFFICIENT PERFORMANCE

New technology allows toilets to use less water without sacrificing performance. Today, the standard toilet uses 1.6 gallons per flush rather than the 3 to 7 gallons used by older models—and some new models offer even greater water savings. Since toilets account for nearly 30 percent of residential water usage, purchasing an efficient toilet can greatly decrease your home's water usage.

High-efficiency toilets employ powerful flushing systems and typically use 1.28 gallons per flush, instead of the standard 1.6. Dual-flush models incorporate two different buttons to allow you to choose between a 0.8-and-1.6 gallon flush. When shopping, look for a WaterSense-labeled product that has been tested to ensure both high efficiency and strong performance.

COMFORT FEATURES

New toilets offer style and comfort, as well as performance. Look for these features when shopping:

COMFORT-HEIGHT MODELS stand at chair height, making it easier to get up and down.

ELONGATED BOWLS offer greater comfort. (Although keep in mind that round bowls take up less space, so they may be a better choice for a small bathroom.)

WIDER FLAPPER VALVES and larger trapways decrease the potential for clogging.

QUIET-CLOSE HINGES ensure the toilet seat never slams.

TRANSITIONAL TOILET SEATS for young children are integrated into some standard toilet seats, eliminating the need to take potty-training seats on and off the family toilet.

SLEEK DESIGNS with concealed trapways and one-piece construction ease cleaning tasks.



MONEY-WISE

SPEND SMART: Bidets offer a cleansing spray of water, as well as deluxe features such as adjustable water temperature and heated seats. If you want this top-of-the-line technology at a more affordable price point, look for bidet seats that can be attached to existing toilet seats.

LIGHTING & VENTILATION

A good lighting plan will make your bathroom really shine, and efficient ventilation will help ensure healthy indoor-air quality. Here's what you need to know when choosing light fixtures and bath fans.

LIGHTING

In recent years bathrooms have become more than just utilitarian spaces. Now they are luxurious rooms for recharging and relaxing. As such, they need an efficient lighting plan that includes task lighting in targeted areas and overall lighting to set the sophisticated mood. Here are the most important components of a good lighting plan:

1. TASK LIGHTING

Plan to include hardworking task lighting at the vanities, where much of the grooming tasks are done. Instead of installing recessed ceiling fixtures that cast shadows on the face, opt for vertical fixtures or sconces on either side of the mirror. If space doesn't allow lighting on both sides of the mirror, you can mount lights directly to the mirror (expect a higher cost) or opt for strip lighting above the mirror that evenly distributes light over the hair and face.

Also plan to include task lighting in the shower and tub areas; the light should be bright enough to ease cleaning and shaving tasks (and allow you to read shampoo labels). Select recessed downlights designed for use in wet areas for either area. If you plan to read in the tub, consider including an adjustable accent light aimed at the tub. If you'll have a separate toilet compartment, plan to include a single recessed downlight or surface fixture in this area as well.

2. AMBIENT LIGHTING

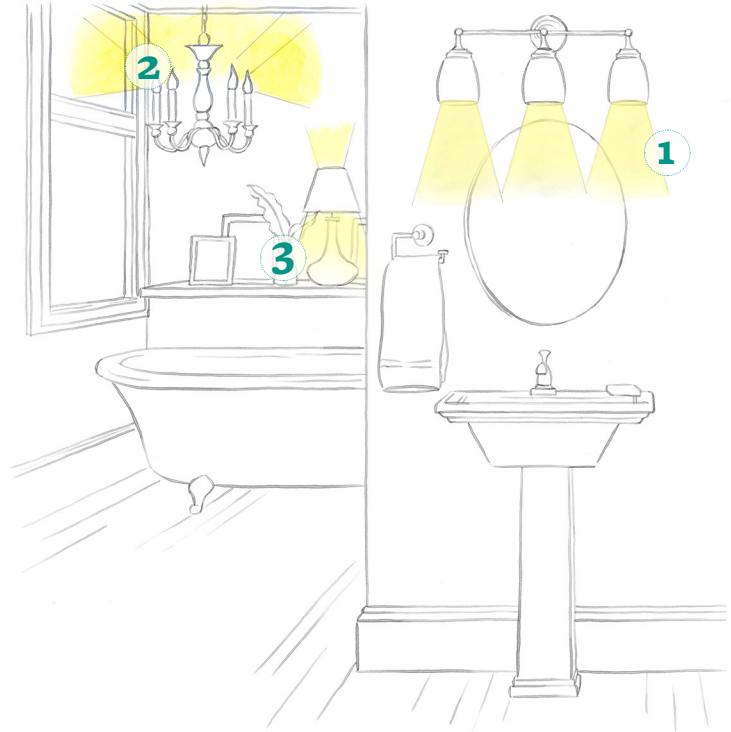
This type of lighting provides general illumination for the room and substitutes for natural lighting when it's not available. Commonly, a surface-mount ceiling light is used in the center of the room, but a pendant light or chandelier can provide mood lighting and additional drama. You can also add a gentle glow around the perimeter of the room with cove lighting. In this scenario, rope lights are hidden behind a molding installed several inches below the ceiling.

3. ACCENT LIGHTING

If you plan to include a favorite piece of artwork or other cherished object in your bath, consider highlighting it with a small recessed spotlight. This technique can also bring extra attention to a custom sink or beautiful tilework.

VENTILATION

Bath fans are especially important in today's airtight homes. They help keep indoor moisture levels down and prevent the growth of mold and mildew. When you shop for a new fan, you'll see they feature different airflow capacities, measured in cubic feet per minute (cfm). The Home Ventilating Institute recommends that fans should have airflow of 1 cfm for every square foot of bathroom space. For bathrooms larger than 100 square feet, add 50 cfm for each toilet, shower, and bathtub, and 100 cfm for a whirlpool tub. The noise level for bath fans is



measured in sones—fans that rate between 0.5 to 1.2 sones are extremely quiet, while fans with ratings of 4.0 or more are noisy. It's best to vent the exhaust outside your home, rather than between floor joists or to an unheated attic, where the humidity can lead to mold that damages floors, walls, and ceiling materials.

MONEY-WISE

SAVE MORE: Opt for an all-in-one ceiling fixture that combines a ventilation fan and lighting. Some models include heating elements for even more versatility.

SPEND SMART: Consider installing a dimmer switch so you can customize the light level and easily change the mood of the space. If you have a double vanity, multiple dimmer controls can allow each person to select their own light levels.