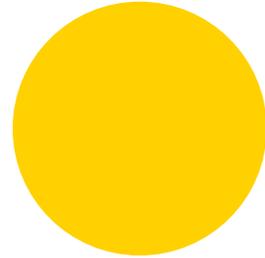


IMPROVEMENT CENTER



Bathroom Hardware Guide

Snazzy hardware completes your bathroom remodel

What's left on the things-to-do list for your bathroom renovation project? If all the major fixtures and finishes are checked off, you may be sighing with relief at the thought that your tough decorating decisions are finally done. However, if you're like many homeowners, stifle that sigh. You are not quite done: One finishing touch, often overlooked, can make a big difference in the completed appearance of your project -- bathroom hardware.

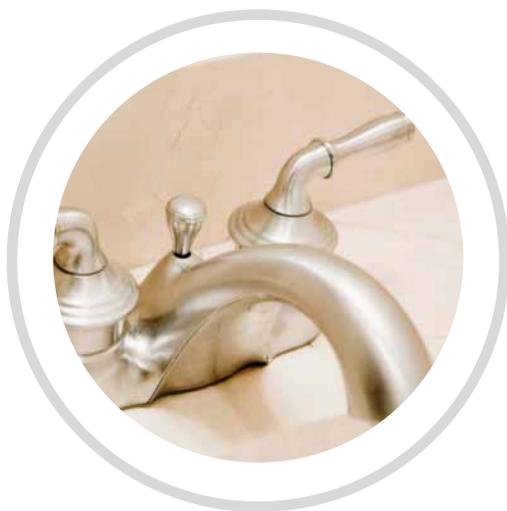


Create atmosphere with your bathroom hardware finish

There are many different types of hardware to enhance the appearance of your bathroom, but first a little bit about finish. You can stick to tried-and-true chrome hardware, but if you want to create a bit of atmosphere, consider one of these less-ordinary finish options:

1. **Bright brass.** Ignore the critics who think brass is gaudy. If Vegas vacations leave you wanting to recreate that lavish style at home, go for it.
2. **Brushed nickel.** At the opposite end of the spectrum, think "formal." This finish is simple yet elegant.
3. **Oil-rubbed bronze.** A great choice for a bathroom where you want to emphasize warm, earth tones.
4. **Wrought iron.** Take your bathroom back to Colonial times. This finish looks as if it just came off the forge.
5. **Antique bronze.** Combine with a marble floor or vanity top to create a bathroom out of ancient Greece or Rome.

These are just a few of the hardware finishes available to transform your bathroom from ordinary to memorable. Match the hardware to the plumbing fixtures, toilet flush lever and shower surround frame to make your bathroom stand out.



Bathroom hardware options for convenience and safety

While some bathroom hardware may help keep water off the floor or a towel close at hand, others can serve an even more important function. Thoughtful placement of grab bars can help family members or guests with injuries or illnesses get out of the tub or ease the use of other fixtures. Consider these bathroom hardware options for your renovation:

1. **Grab bar.** This piece of hardware is normally mounted in a tub/shower or next to the toilet, but can be installed anywhere a little assistance might be needed. It can prevent a fall by providing a secure handhold and also offer help when someone is rising to a standing position. Grab bars are available in several sizes and styles, but regardless of which you choose, make sure it is securely anchored to the wall. If you're not ready for a grab bar now, install blocking behind the sheetrock during your renovation so the hardware can be mounted in the future. Grab bar prices range from around \$30 to \$120 depending on length and style.

2. **Towel bars.** While you may think this bathroom hardware is a given, placement can make a big difference if you have water in your eyes. Put it close enough to the tub/shower to reach the towel but far enough to keep it dry. Towel bars and rings are available in numerous sizes, styles, and finishes. Most towel bars are in the \$20 to \$100 range, but special finishes and styles may cost more.
3. **Shower enclosures.** Framed shower enclosures do the job they were designed to do, but if you want to create a dramatic effect, install a frame-less surround during your renovation. Frame-less enclosures use structural glass so there's a minimum of exposed metal -- in some cases just the door handle, hinges and at the shower wall where the panels are anchored. Costs can vary depending on the size of the shower and number of panels, but expect them to start around \$500. Well over \$1,000 is not unusual.

These examples are just a few of the many types of hardware you can find to enhance your bathroom. Consult with a design professional or bathroom remodeling contractor for more ideas and options.

