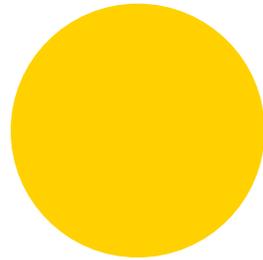


IMPROVEMENT CENTER



Vanity Cabinet Installation Guide

Vanity cabinet installation guide for DIYers

Installing new vanity cabinets during a bathroom renovation is a task that even beginning DIYers should be able to tackle. Whether you have a single vanity or plan on a multi-cabinet configuration, the installation steps can be very similar. This guide provides easy to follow steps to help with the process.



Tools needed for the project

A vanity cabinet installation can normally be accomplished using tools many DIYers already have in their collections. This is what might be needed for your project:

- Measuring tape
- Level
- Electric or cordless drill
- Electric or cordless jigsaw
- Cabinet screws (2 1/2 to 3 1/2 inches are usually best)
- Drill bit for pilot holes
- Wood shims
- Cabinet clamps (when two or more cabinets are being installed together)
- Hammer

This list is for a standard installation -- special conditions may require additional tools. Total cost for the shims and screws should be under \$15.



Wall prep

While there may be several vanity cabinets in your layout, the anchors are the sink base cabinets, which receive the vanity top sink bowls. Bathroom design drawings normally indicate where these particular cabinets are to be set and if everything went according to plan, plumbing lines should be roughed out of the wall in these locations. Take these steps to prep the wall:

- Measure the height of a vanity cabinet and make a mark on the wall where the top of the cabinet will be located. The mark should be covered when the vanity top is put in place.
- Using the design drawings as a guide, make a mark on the wall where one end of the vanity cabinet will be located.
- Make another mark on the wall where the other end of your single cabinet or line of cabinets will be located. This measurement should correspond to the total width of all of your vanity cabinets when added together.
- Using the mark that designates the top of the cabinets as a reference point, make a small mark at the same height where the vertical framing members (studs) behind the sheetrock or wall covering are located. Spacing should be at 16 inches on center, but could be different depending on your home's age. Make these marks at all cabinet locations in your new layout.

Double check to ensure the plumbing roughs are coming out of the wall in the correct locations. The roughs don't need to be centered in the sink base cabinets, but do need to be located within the cabinets' interior. This is also a good time to make sure your vanity cabinet locations are not going to encroach on another fixture's required space. Check local plumbing code for bathroom fixture space requirements.



Vanity cabinet installation

It's usually easier to work with vanity cabinets if doors and drawers are removed prior to installation. This makes the cabinets lighter and reduces the chance of damage to the faces. They can easily be replaced when installation is complete, but you may want to wait until the plumber is done as well.

- Set the first vanity cabinet in place against the wall. If it's a sink base, check to see if it has a rear panel. Many sink bases are made without rear panels to allow the plumbing rough-in to extend into the box. However, if the cabinet does have a panel, mark where it needs to be cut to allow access. Drill a pilot hole and then use the jigsaw to cut holes for the plumbing drain and supply lines.
- Use the level to check the cabinet's alignment from front to back and side to side. Tap in shims at the bottom of the cabinet as needed to level it in both directions.
- Using your framing member marks as a guide, place one screw through the rear framing of the cabinet interior and into the wall. Make it snug, but not completely tight, as further adjustments may be needed.

- If you have additional cabinets, install them one at a time. Ensure each front face is flush with the previous cabinet prior to installing the fastener through the rear frame. A cabinet clamp can be used to hold the faces and top edges flush while the boxes are fastened together.
- Once aligned, drill a pilot hole through the inside edge of one front face and into the adjoining cabinet. Install a cabinet screw in the pilot hole to draw the faces tight to each other: be careful not to puncture the cabinet faces.
- Once the front faces are in alignment, fasten each cabinet to the rear wall.

When all cabinets have been installed, check that alignment is still correct in both directions. If okay, finish securing each cabinet to the rear wall at the framing members and tighten all fasteners that are already installed.