

# How Much Does it Cost to Finish an Attic?

The average cost of attic conversion is \$15,000 to \$85,000, nationally. The price tag for an attic renovation project can differ greatly, depending on the complexity of the job. The average cost of finishing an attic depends on the kind of room being created, as well as how much work is required.

Before you hire a professional, take a look at the many factors that can contribute to a higher total cost.

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## How Much Does It Cost to Finish an Attic? Cost Overview by Kind of Attic

Finishing an attic cost typically is \$30 to \$60 per square foot. An attic can look like many things, with both a small crawl space as well as a finished living area both being counted as an attic. Due to this, the price tag for renovating an attic can differ greatly. Let's take a look at the cost associated with different types of attics.

<b>Finishes</b>	<b>Costs</b>
Walk-Up	\$1,000 to \$2,900
Storage	\$4,600 to \$18,900
Dormer	\$4,600 to \$16,400
Above Garage	\$4,600 to \$24,000

### Cost to Finish Walk Up Attic

To renovate an attic into a walk up, finished attic, stairs and flooring must be added to the space. The cost to convert an attic to a living space is much more than just creating a storage attic. To install stairs, the price will range from \$1,000 to \$2,900. The cost to install wood flooring, which is typically what would be

installed in a finished attic, is around \$2,500 to \$6,800.

## Cost to Finish Storage Attic

To finish an attic with the intention of using it for storage, and not an area for actively using, the cost is \$4,600 to \$18,900 depending on how much storage you will want to add. This is a great way to utilize smaller spaces to their fullest potential.

## Cost to Finish Attic with a Dormer

To renovate an attic with a dormer, your contractor will likely take on the project differently. As such, the cost will be different. The price will be \$4,600 to \$16,400. Note: If intending to use this space as a bedroom, be sure that the window in this dormer is at least 5.7 square feet to meet code requirements for an egress window.

## Cost to Finish Attic Above a Garage

Finishing a space above a garage will cost differently as outbuildings will have different coding requirements, and thus the cost will differ slightly. Finishing above a garage ranges from \$4,600 to \$24,000, largely depending on the current condition of the building. If you intend to use this space as an actual room, you will likely want heat installed. An electric baseboard heater will cost from \$400 to \$1,200.

## How Much Does it Cost to Convert an Attic?

If you intend on converting an attic into another active room for your home, the cost will differ greatly depending on the type of room. Conversion into a living space has a wide range of \$8,000 to \$80,000. This total depends on the type of room as well as the current conditions of the room. The cost to convert an attic into a living space is more than a storage space.

One important aspect to consider is that an attic must be at least 7 feet tall at the highest point in order to be considered a livable space. You may need to raise your roof (literally, not in the party sense!) which can cost around \$15,000 to \$125,000, depending on the attic. You may also be able to just vault a ceiling, which can cost \$16,000 to \$24,000.

It can be difficult to give a figure for attic conversion cost per square foot, so instead, look to the kind of room being created and the kind of cost factors related to it. In general, the larger the space, the higher the cost.

<b>Additional Features</b>	<b>Costs</b>
Bathroom	\$9,600 to \$52,000
Bedroom	\$8,000 to \$30,000
Master Suite	\$27,000 to \$80,000


Total Dormer Conversion	\$2,500 to \$20,000
Home Office	\$10,000 to \$40,000

### **Attic to Bathroom Cost**

The attic bathroom cost will differ greatly as advanced plumbing is required for certain features. To convert an attic into a bathroom, expect to pay around \$9,600 to \$52,000. This includes both finishing the attic space as well as installing a bathroom. This project will add a lot of value to a home, as an extra bathroom is usually a plus for potential buyers. This addition can also turn a bedroom into a suite if your home's layout permits. One important thing to note is that plumbing should be installed before finishing the attic as installing plumbing behind finished walls is much more expensive.

### **Attic to Bedroom Cost**

The cost to convert an attic to a bedroom is \$8,000 to \$30,000. This includes finishing, flooring, and painting. Your attic may not have certain features required for a bedroom code-wise, such as an egress window, proper ventilation, electrical outlets, etc, thus you may have to charge extra for these important features.

### **Attic to Master Suite Cost**

This combines the previous two categories into one space. To convert an attic into an ensuite will cost from \$27,000 to \$80,000.

## **Dormer Attic Conversion Cost**

To install a dormer, the cost is typically \$2,500 to \$20,000 depending on the type of roof as well as size. Installing a dormer can greatly increase the amount of usable space in your attic.

## **Attic to Home Office Cost**

Everyone needs a home office! Creating a workspace ranges from \$10,000 to \$40,000.

## **How Much to Finish an Attic? Cost Overview by Parts of Project**

How much does it cost to renovate an attic? To convert your attic space, there are many construction steps. Not every project requires every step, so it is helpful to fully understand the cost for each step of renovation. Each of these steps may require a completely different professional hired. Attic addition costs, or attic renovation costs, are a multi-faceted, multi-step process.

### **Cleaning the Attic**

Before renovation even begins, your attic will need to be cleaned. While you may be able to do this yourself, [a professional cleaning service will make this much, much easier.](#)

To properly clean an attic, you'll need to do simple tasks such as removing your stuff, as well as cleaning water damage, rodent damage as well as potentially removing insulation. The average cost of hiring a professional attic cleaning ranges from \$110 to \$160.

### **Adding Insulation to Your Attic**

To make your attic inhabitable, insulation will need to be added. To add attic insulation, installation will cost between \$800 to \$3,500.

Spray foam insulation is a common choice for attic insulation as it is easy to use in new construction spaces. If using spray foam insulation, expect \$3 to \$5 per square foot. Insulation is an important component of attic renovation and should not be skipped. Having proper insulation can help you save money down the line in terms of heating and air conditioning costs.

### **Adding Flooring to Your Attic**

Finished flooring is required in an attic if you intend to use it as livable space. Flooring, and subflooring, are necessities for a comfortable space. The cost will vary depending on material.

Hardwood flooring will cost around \$4,000, while carpeting will cost around \$2,500. Tile or laminate, if renovating the space into a bathroom or similar room, will cost around \$1,000 to \$2,000.

## **Adding Windows to Your Attic**

The average cost to install a window is \$500. Consider installing a dormer window or a skylight, which will assist in bringing more natural light into your space.

## **Adding Walls and Drywalls to Your Attic**

Walls are required to make a room. If your attic doesn't have either walls or drywalls, they will need to be installed. To install drywall, the costs are around \$375 to \$1,500. These costs include both materials and labor, with it being roughly \$30 to \$60 per panel.

To install walls, you will need to hire a carpenter. The cost will be around \$1,900. You will likely need to add a ceiling as well, which will be around \$1,500. Lastly, most attic rooms need a basic baseboard, which will be around \$1,000 to install.

## **Installing Lighting in an Attic**

To take a dusty dark attic into a liveable space, you will need lighting. You will need electrical wiring, lighting installation, as well as outlets. Lighting installation is typically \$130 to \$150, while electricians typically charge around \$45 to \$120 per hour. The total cost may be between \$1,300 to \$3,000.

## **Painting an Attic**

Your new space will also need to be painted. This step can be completed through DIY methods, but if you'd like to save your precious time and energy, a professional painter can be hired. The cost to hire an interior painter is around \$200 to \$2,700.

## **HVAC Attic Installation**

This newly renovated space will need to be attached to your home's HVAC system. HVAC contractors, who can facilitate this renovation, will need to be between \$50 to \$120 per hour.

## **Plumbing in an Attic**

While not necessary in every attic, if you are installing a bathroom, plumbing will need to be added. Expect to pay between \$50 to \$200 an hour for new pipes and drains, as well as installation of the appliances itself. Be aware that the fixtures, such as the toilet, sink, shower, will have an extra cost to them as well. In total, not counting fixtures, expect to pay around \$1,000 to \$1,500.

## **Stairs/Ladders for Attics**

If you do not already have a way to reach the attic easily, you will need to install either stairs or a ladder. The cost to install either is around \$220 to \$650. This cost is for collapsible options, but if you desire a permanent installation, expect to pay much more.

## **What impacts the cost of renovating an attic?**

The cost of finishing an attic can be impacted by many things. Attic renovations require taking an unfinished, likely dirty, space and turning it into a pristine finished room. It is not the same as remodeling other parts of your home. Attic renovation includes labor, inspection and license fees, as well as other materials. Home renovations, both attics and otherwise, can quickly become expensive so we recommend looking at the potential cost impacts carefully in order to see where you can save money.

Here are a few factors for attic finishing costs:

### **Size of Space**

Like most home renovation projects, the larger the area of construction, the higher the cost. Larger attics will require more time, money, and materials.

One thing to consider is that there are many elements that determine the actual amount of usable space in an attic. These factors include the following:

- Number and types of trusses to support the roof
- Joists and roof pitch
- Ceiling height (7 feet)
- Number of windows
- Method of heating
- Staircase/ladder safety

If the space is difficult to access while renovating, expect to pay around 10% to 20% more.

### **Code Requirements**

Depending on where you live, you may need to add new projects to your to-do list in order to meet code requirements. Be sure to do your research into what is legally required in your state for your home remodel project. You will likely need a building permit, which can be around \$400 to \$2,000 depending on where you live.

## **Structural Changes**

To make your attic more functional, you may need to make some major structural changes. For example, your ceiling may need to be raised in order to provide extra headroom.

## **Building Regulations**

Now that you understand the general attic remodeling cost, it is important to understand how building regulations impact these prices. Converting a space like an attic into a livable space requires certain coding requirements to be met. Local requirements and regulations vary, so be sure to do your research into what is needed in your area. In general, the following issues are affected by building codes:

### **Total Square Feet**

For a space to be considered habitable, it needs to have enough space. A habitable room should have at least 70 sq. feet of usable space, with 7 feet in any direction. A habitable space is defined as an area for living, sleeping, eating or cooking, so a bathroom, storage space, or other similar areas will not need to meet this requirement.

### **Staircase**

To utilize your new space, you will need an easy way to access the area. Most state codes require stairways to be 36 inches wide or more. If you have a finished attic intended as liveable space rather than storage, you'll need to get rid of your drop-down stairs and replace it with fixed stairs.

### **Windows**

If the attic space is becoming a window, most codes require an egress, such as a full-size window. Building codes require fixed and operable windows to meet or exceed 8 percent of the usable floor space, as well as 4 percent of the square footage be windows that open out.

### **Ceiling Height**

Your attic likely isn't designed for people to stand up comfortably in. Most codes require at least 50 percent of finished space to have ceilings at least 7 feet in height.

### **Flooring**

The flooring of your attic needs to be able to support weight, specifically 30 pounds per square foot. A professional will be able to assist you with this calculation, and we do not recommend attempting to determine if it is safe alone.

## **Roof**

Roof rafters may need added reinforcement in order to safely accommodate the added weight of the finished project, including the finished ceiling and added lighting, electrical and plumbing, and HVAC.

## **Extending Your HVAC**

In your newly renovated space, you may need to add extra HVAC ductwork in order to maintain a liveable climate. Your home's HVAC system needs to be capable of maintaining a comfortable temperature of 68 degrees.

Hiring a professional will help you determine if this renovation is necessary. A consultation with a structural engineer can assist you to determine if HVAC installation is even necessary. This consultation will be around \$100 per hour. HVAC installation is typically \$4,000 to \$12,000 for the whole hole, while installing ductwork is typically \$100 to \$250.

## **How to Save Money on Attic Renovation**

Attic renovation costs can quickly get expensive, so it's important to utilize money saving methods where you can.

**DIY some of the work.** Some of the work can be completed without hiring a professional. Consider doing tasks like cleaning or painting yourself, or choose flooring methods that can be completed yourself.

**Cheaper materials.** While we understand the urge to choose the best of the best for everything, there are definitely places where you can choose the cheaper option and still have the same aesthetic result. For example, laminate flooring over wood flooring.

**Talk to your contractor.** Your contractor can help you determine what fits your budget best. They can recommend great but cheaper materials, or even help you consider if you really need that new expensive feature.

## **Why Should You Renovate Your Attic**

There are plenty of great reasons to renovate your attic. If you find yourself needing extra space, look to your attic. An attic renovation will be much cheaper than adding a completely new home addition. An attic

is a great place to add a room like an office, or a playroom, or even something like an art studio. A renovated attic can be a great way to finally have that dream home addition that never felt feasible before.

An attic renovation can also add value to your home, especially if you are taking an unusable space and turning it into living space. An attic remodel's return on investment ranges from 50% to 75%. If not being turned into living space, this renovation may not add much to your home's value. The average cost of attic conversion is well worth the price tag.

## What Kind of Specialists are Hired for an Attic Renovation?

To complete an attic renovation, you will likely need to hire multiple different types of specialists.

A **cleaner** will assist you with cleaning your attic, if you choose to hire a specialist. The national average cost is \$100 to \$160.

An **insulation professional** will assist with adding insulation to your attic. The national average cost is \$800 to \$3,500.

**Flooring installers** will do exactly what it says: install flooring, as well as subflooring. The national average cost is \$1,000 to \$4,000.

The same goes for **drywall specialists**, who will install drywalls. The national average cost is \$375 - \$1,500. The national average labor cost is \$30 - \$60 per panel.

A **carpenter** can assist in multiple areas: installing walls and installing ceilings, both necessities for your attic renovation and both tasks that you likely will not be able to DIY. To install walling, the national average is \$1,900, while to install ceilings, the national average is \$1,500.

Another task that likely should not be done DIY is adding lighting and outlets. To have this task completed, we recommend hiring an **electrician**. The national average cost is \$130 - \$150, while the national average labor cost is \$45 - \$120, per hour.

You will also need to hire a specialist to install windows in your attic. A **window installer** will go for \$500, in terms of national average. It can also be by window, which will cost \$135 to \$250. Another two specialists to consider are **HVAC contractors** and **plumbers**. While you may not absolutely need these specialists, it's still something to consider. An HVAC contractor will be \$40 to \$250 on national average, or \$50 to \$120 per hour. A plumber will be \$1,000 to \$1,500, or \$50 to \$200 per hour.

## How to Hire a Contractor

It can be overwhelming trying to find the best contractor and other specialists, but we have some helpful tips to assist the process.

**Check their credentials to ensure they have the appropriate licence for their work.** Many states require that a contractor has a license, and other specialists, such as electricians, plumbers or HVAC specialists, require licenses as well.

**Ask for free estimates from several individuals.** Feel free to shop around and try to find the best price for you and your project.

**Get every aspect of the project in writing.** Before you officially give the contractor or other specialist money, be sure to get a written contract. This contract will include price, materials, timeline and other issues.

## **Find an Attic Contractor Near You**

Now that you are aware of the issues regarding an attic renovation, you can make an educated decision when it comes to choosing your attic contractor. [Check out House Tipster's online resources](#) for finding the right contractor for you.