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... It may sound like an absolute nightmare having a wet room installed (effectively turning one room in your house into a giant power shower,) but this is somewhat of a myth. You can go down the route hiring someone to concrete your existing bathroom, but there are many wet room kits out there which can give you pretty much the same results using plywood and are easy enough to assemble yourself. There's a few considerations you'll need to take if you're going for the DIY option however, or you may come unstuck:

#### **- Ask yourself "Is this feasible?"**

If you've got blueprints to the property, great: you'll need to map out the dimensions of the room including door and window placement, plumbing, feature locations, etc. Any curveballs which will get thrown at you will crop up from the outset, and almost all can be worked around but this will of course effect how much budget you'll need to cover the construction of the wet room.

#### **- Planning, planning and more planning**

Sure, you'll want your wet room to look fantastic when it's done, but your choice of appliances affects all of the above so you need to have a clear idea what will be in it afterwards. Thermostatic showers are great because of their versatility and can be installed in most homes (and to prevent you from turning yourself into a boiled lobster, the majority of thermostatic showers come with safety devices.) Power showers are usually the popular choice, but these will need a certified plumber to install and only low pressure, tank fed systems can support power showers...

... Your choice of bathroom fittings can say a lot about you and have a massive impact on the overall impression your visitors will get when they use the facilities. Although they seem like such a small detail when compared to other furnishings, bathroom taps in particular can dramatically alter a room - whether you choose chrome bathroom accessories or opt for the coloured variety, this makes as much of a difference as the physical style of the taps. Any colour or finish is fine, but the best advice is to try and apply as much uniformity to your bathroom fittings as possible - for instance, nothing looks better than all-silver features from the shower down to the toilet seat handle, and the converse is also true (mis-

matched plastic taps and a shiny copper mirror is a no-no!)

In terms of style, minimalist-looking bathroom taps are the in thing at the moment, and the fashion doesn't seem to be disappearing anytime soon. You really can't go wrong with some of the Swedish designs that are available through most UK stockists - whether you go for two separate taps or a mixer, try and stick to angular designs featuring flat sides. Not only do they look stunning, but you'll also find they're easier to keep gleaming for anyone that happens to frequent your bathroom....

... Everyone loves a good shower, and the difference in quality between them is staggering (why are hotel showers the most refreshing things on Earth?)

A lot of it comes down to things we have little control over, such as water pressure and size restraints, but there are plenty of things we can do to make our showers just that little bit more indulging. The functionality of your shower is obviously important - is your shower head so clogged with limescale it barely trickles, and is the drain stuffed full of so much hair you might as well call it a bath?

Appearances also go a long way to making a classy shower, and that comes down to your fittings. Once you've got a squeaky-clean shower door, de-scaled shower head and mirror-shine tiles, you may want to look at your neglected shower valve. This is the thing that not only draws attention but has a direct impact on effectiveness - if you've ever accidentally doused yourself with ice-cold water by knocking your existing shower valve with your elbow you'll know what I mean...

... Wet rooms - they're the ultimate in bathroom chic, and whether it's an entire suite or just the corner of a bathroom, these are some of the most luxurious showers you'll ever experience. But what about having a bath in a wet room? Sure, it sounds a bit unorthodox as wet rooms are usually seen as installations primarily for showers, but it can be done and in some cases is even a very good idea. If you've ever been house viewing in the past, consider how impressed you were by those bathrooms featuring antique roll top baths compared to those which only had showers. If you're planning to sell the house in the future, remember that no matter how nice your wet room is that many potential buyers will still be turned off by the lack of a bath.

Still, there's no reason why both showers and baths can't have their own place in modern wet rooms (which will dramatically add value to any property.) Obviously,

you'll need a large-ish floor space to incorporate both and the drainage complications involved may require you to hire a professional in to do it. You may also need to get a whole new bath, since the aforementioned roll top baths with ornate copper legs can look very out of place with the stream-lined look of most contemporary wet rooms...

... If you were to transport someone from the early nineteenth century to the modern day and told them about electric showers, I'm pretty sure they'd furrow their brow. Electricity and water have never been good bedfellows, and the notion of standing in an enclosed cubicle with both going on at once sounds almost suicidal.

Obviously these types of shower valves have been around for some time and aren't as ridiculous as they look on paper. If anything, they're a sound investment for any bill payer as you're only heating the water you use, since cold water is heated along the way through the shower valves in is delivered to you toasty warm. Electric showers start from as little as £50, and you're more than likely to recoup this money in the course of a single year (especially in a family household.)

One thing I will say about electric showers is that they shouldn't be mixed up with other types of shower valves, especially power showers. Don't get an electric shower (even a pumped variety) and expect it to have the force of modern power showers - these are two different animals entirely and perform differently. In terms of similarities, both have water pressure requirements and it's a good idea to compare these with your current plumbing before you go out and get either...

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