



# TUB & TILE REFINISHING GUIDE

CONSUMER AWARENESS GUIDE TO SMART  
BATHTUB REFINISHING

What you need to know before deciding to  
Refinish or Replace, and DIY vs. Hiring a Pro.





# Tub & Tile Refinishing Guide

**What you need to know before deciding whether to Refinish or Replace, and Steps to DIY vs. Hiring a Pro.**



## **First: A little bit about our background, and why we put this guide together for you:**

Surface Renew Inc. is a specialty tradesman company that began in April, 2004 and is based in Maumelle, AR. Services include repairing, resurfacing and refinishing bath tubs, wall and counter tile surfaces, showers, sinks and countertops.

Tile resurfacing is a cost and time effective alternative to replacement. We resurface your fixtures with a hard and durable surface. These new surfaces come in a variety of modern colors and textures of your choice. Above all, your repaired and refinished surfaces are ready to use that same day.

A great thing about Surface Renew is our versatility. We service residential homes and condos as well as commercial businesses such as hotels, motels, schools and other business facilities. Property managers love us because of our fast service and great attention to detail. Our clients find the most value in our services by opting for cost effective tile resurfacing instead of expensive replacement.

Surface Renew, Inc. is a solid business with a strong reputation for doing quality, professional refinishing and resurfacing of kitchen and bathroom fixtures for home owners, renters and property investors in the state of Arkansas.

Based upon the core principles of honesty, integrity, thoroughness, attention to detail and timeliness with communication and service, Surface Renew is the leading trusted company you can depend on to take care of your resurfacing projects.

Service areas in central and north west Arkansas are the following cities (including their surrounding areas): Little Rock, North Little Rock, Conway, Ft. Smith, Van Buren, Alma, Benton, Bryant, Fayetteville and Springdale.

## **About our founder and how he got started with resurfacing:**

Bob Kennedy is US Army veteran and the owner of Surface Renew.

During his last year in the US Army Bob Kennedy began buying investment properties that had a lot of ugly bathtubs. He tried DIY kits but the results did not last as long as he liked. So he sought out a better solution and found better equipment and materials and brought them to the Little Rock, Arkansas market. And thus Surface Renew was born.

The difference between Surface Renew and certain other refinishing services: We are Maumelle Arkansas owned and operated. That means you'll get great service and won't send a sub-contractor to your home. Customers get the owner of the company or one of its technicians who are personally trained and supervised by Bob Kennedy himself.

***Surface Renew can remodel your kitchen or bathroom in one day.***

This saves customers not only 2-4 weeks of dust and debris but also offers 70%-90% savings over replacement!

By far our best selling product is the standard tub refinish. But we can also refinish your bathroom sink, bathroom counter tops, kitchen counter tops and wall tile.

Surface Renew can fix the cracks and chips in your fiberglass tubs and showers. Because of our tile repair service customers save \$1,000's in not tearing out the old units.

If you have an ugly tub, tile, sink or counter that's cracked, chipped, dirty and/or discolored then it can be refinished with a new bonded surface.

No need to replace your bathtub or other fixtures when refinishing is a fraction of the cost AND be ready for use within a few hours.

The next time you're thinking of doing a bathroom or kitchen remodel give Surface Renew a call at 501-920-9326. We've been saving people money since 2004!

## **Now let's get into the details of what you should know about resurfacing:**

Refinishing is a process that's also commonly known as reglazing or resurfacing.

The process involves repairing any scratches or dents, removing the old finish and applying a fresh finish with a glossy top-coat that makes the tub, sink, or tiles look brand new again.

The overall cost of this project and whether or not it makes sense for your situation depends on a variety of factors.

This handy guide is for you to learn more about the pros and cons associated with refinishing or replacing your bathtub.

We've also compiled information to help you decide whether to hire a professional or try doing it yourself.

Although this guide is focusing on bathtubs, most of the information herein also applies to any tile surface such as sinks, countertops and wall tiles.

## In This Guide:



1. Refinishing vs. Replacing a Bathtub
2. When to Not Refinish
3. DIY or Hire?
4. Steps in DIY Refinishing
5. Common DIY Mistakes
6. Hiring a Pro
7. Cost to Refinish a Tub
8. Getting Best Value

By refinishing your old tub instead of replacing it, you can enjoy a like-new look for only a fraction of the cost and hassle of a large renovation.

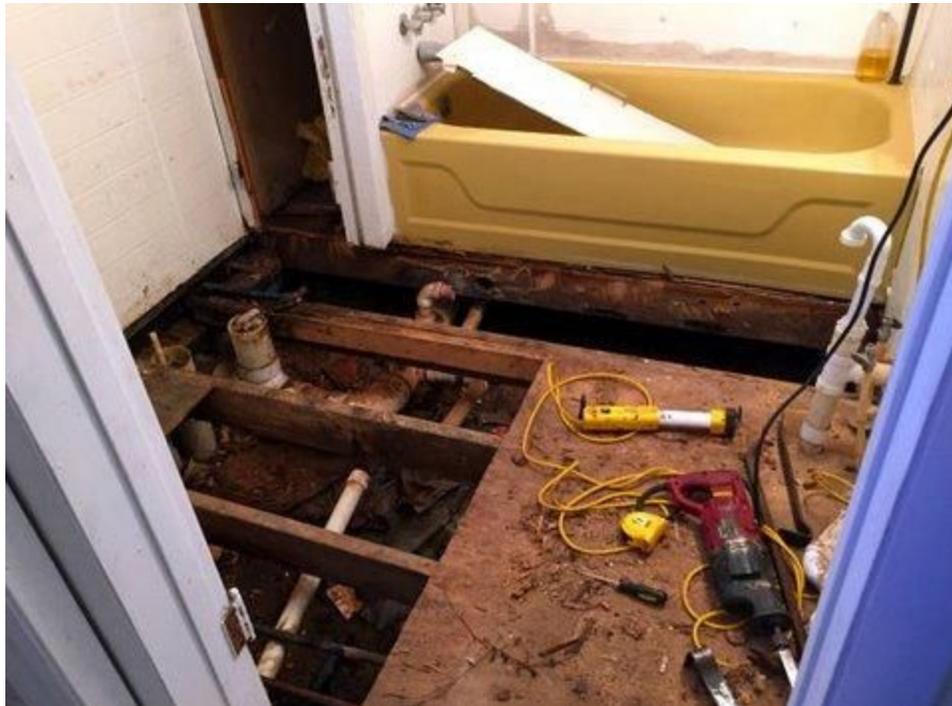
In most cases, replacing a bathtub requires an extensive amount of work and a considerable investment of both time and money. The overall cost of this project, and whether or not it makes sense for your situation, depends on a variety of factors.

Read on to learn more about the pros and cons associated with refinishing or replacing your bathtub. We've also compiled information to help you make an informed decision whether to hire a professional or try doing it yourself.

# 1) Refinishing vs. Replacing a Bathtub

There are many reasons for giving your bathtub a facelift. Whether your existing one is simply old and unsightly or you're remodeling the entire bathroom, rehabbing the tub can make a significant difference in the look of the room. When it comes down to getting the job done, the question remains: should you replace or refinish?

## Replacing



Most basic tubs retail for as little as **\$300**, which may be equal to or even less expensive than refinishing. Before you start shopping, you need to consider the hidden costs involved in replacing a bathtub, which include:

- Demolition and removal of the old tub typically adds **\$500-\$1,000** to the final price
- Hiring a plumber to re-attach pipes **costs \$299** according to the national average
- Installation of the new tub **costs \$2,896** according to the national average
- If you're thinking of replacing your tub with a shower pan, first consider the effect this could have on the **home's resale appeal**. Most prospective buyers shy away from homes without a bathtub, particularly if they have children

Once you add everything up, that \$300 tub turns into a project that costs **more than \$3,000**. There's also always the chance that you'll encounter structural or plumbing problems along the way, which extends the time and cost of the project.

## Refinishing



To refinish a tub, most homeowners spend between **\$200 and \$900**, with the average cost coming in at **around \$460**.

However our prices begin at \$295 and are more normally around \$395 for most bathtubs.

So if you consider all of the costs associated with replacing then refinishing seems like a real bargain.

Additionally, if you have an irreplaceable antique or rare bathtub you likely want to keep it to preserve the charm of your decor or the historical accuracy it provides in an older house.

## 2) When Refinishing Isn't a Good Idea

It's important to note that to refinish a bathtub isn't always the best idea. Here are 3 primary reasons for not refinishing.

### a) Damaged Beyond Repair



If the tub is damaged beyond repair then replacement is the best option. However, we rarely encounter a tub that is “beyond repair”. Over the last 15+ years in business we’ve seen and repaired just about everything you can imagine.

Examples of a tub “beyond repair” are destroyed in a major explosion or cut into pieces with a saw.

## b) Timeliness to Use



If you're having a party or company coming to stay within the next day or two, and they will need to use the fixtures, then it's best to put off refinishing until after the event.

Refinishing takes about a day to cure. So that means the fixtures being resurfaced aren't usable for about 24 hours. Wait until the fixtures are not needed for a few days. Then go ahead and refinish.



### c) You Want a Different Style



If for example, you have a regular bathtub but really want an ornate clawfoot tub, then no amount of refinishing will make your regular style tub look like that.

Or for another example, you might have a regular tub but really want a Jacuzzi/spa tub with water jets.

Refinishing your old tub won't turn it into a Jacuzzi tub.

When you simply want a different style you'll have to make the decision to refurbish and keep your old tub or replace it with a more desirable style.

#### d) Bonus Reason



This one is so rare we didn't make it a Top 3 but it does bear mentioning.

Think **Antique RoadShow**.

If you have a tub that was for example from the 1700's and once owned by Thomas Jefferson then do not refurbish it!

The natural patina is part of its historic value and appeal.

But seriously, how often does this come up?

A tub like this should be in a museum anyway; or perhaps sealed in a historian's private collection.

### 3) DIY or Hire a Pro?



Whether you decide to hire a professional or do the project on your own, it's important to research the materials used to refinish the tub, including how to refinish a bathtub and how long over-the-counter DIY chemicals typically lasts.

You'll also need to fix any plumbing issues before starting the project.

To help you decide whether to hire a professional or trying to do this yourself, read through some tips for both choices.

One of the main benefits of refinishing on your own is saving money.

But you do have to factor in the value of your time in the following ways:

- Learning how to master this trade
- Acquiring all the proper tools and chemicals required, and
- The time to complete the project.

## 4) Steps to Do it Yourself (DIY)

If you approach this as a DIY project, then know that you'll have fewer color choices available.

And you might end up with a questionable finish because DIY chemicals aren't pro quality and they are applied by roller and/or brush.

Since that is so, then the finish may not last as long either. Pros apply the chemicals via spray gun.

The difference is like painting your car with a brush vs. spraying painting.

Here are the DIY steps to follow:

- A. **Learn How.** Research the internet for DIY self help. Watch a lot of video. Then practice on an old fixture or some scrap tiles to hone your skills before having a go at the main item.
- B. **Buy the Tools and Materials.** Research the best tools and material you'll need for the project. Spend time shopping online or go to a big box home store.

Look for a complete kit that includes everything you need for the project, including cleaner, sandpaper, primer, refinishing paint, a roller, a brush and a tray, all for **\$60 to \$100**.

The best kits use a durable resin coating instead of epoxy, which is quick to discolor and chip. Most of the cheaper kits only come with the epoxy coating, which means you still need to buy all the extras and you might end up wanting to refinish the tub again in a year or two.

- C. **Take Safety Precautions.** Most professionals wear coveralls and HEPA air filters to protect themselves from the fumes and from coming into contact with the refinishing paint.

At the very least, you should wear a mask, goggles and gloves because the refinishing chemicals when in liquid or vapor form are harsh on the skin and toxic if inhaled. They are however safe when fully dry and cured.

- D. **Do the work.** Start by protecting the areas you aren't refinishing with a tarp or plastic sheeting. Prepare the tub surface by sanding it down and repairing cracks before applying the primer, refinishing paint and topcoat. Clean up the mess afterward.

## Tub Refinishing Tips

If you rely on a refinishing company to do the work for you, the only thing you need to worry about is making sure that the plumbing fixtures are in good shape.

For example, if you want to replace the faucet or if you have a leak, that should be done before the refinisher arrives. If you opt to go at it alone, here are a few tips to get you started.

### Prepare the Area

Pros will protect the rest of your bathroom and home by covering the floor and other fixtures with heavy-duty plastic to prevent overspray and dust from carrying over to areas that aren't being refinished.

Using an exhaust fan to ventilate the bathroom for several days helps vent the odor of the refinishing products while they are curing.

### Remove the Old Finish

Before you can add a new finish to your bathtub, you need to strip the old one off by sanding the surface thoroughly.

The new finish adheres best to a perfectly smooth surface.

### Repair Imperfections

Once you have the old finish sanded off, evaluate the surface of the tub.

Any areas with rust, cracks or chips must be repaired with a waterproof crack-repair product or something similar.

### Apply the New Finish

The exact instructions may vary from product to product, but most tub-refinishing products include a primer that's applied to the prepared surface. Allow the primer to dry before applying several coats of the refinishing material.

Let the material dry between each layer and before applying a sealing coat. Once the top coat goes on, the tub's new finish typically needs to set for 24 hours before you can run water over it.



## 6) Hiring a Pro



**Hiring a professional to refinish your tub is relatively inexpensive when you factor in all the time and potential pitfalls involved in a DIY project.**

In return for paying to have someone do the work, you save time, eliminate the worry of making mistakes and receive numerous benefits, such as:

- Avoiding the mess fumes of the refinishing product
- Avoiding the health hazards of exposure to toxic chemicals
- Having superior surface preparation
- Enjoying high-quality finishing that makes the tub look like new
- Getting an increased number of color choices. We can match your existing color or create custom shades
- Obtaining a finish that can last anywhere from 5 to 15 years compared to the 2-year longevity of DIY products

When you hire a professional, you can allow the pro to guide your choices in the color and finish of the reglazing tub product.

Many pros can create custom colors to match what you already have or provide a completely different, fresher look.

**Ask potential contractors:**

- **Their background:** How long have you been refinishing bathtubs? How many similar projects do you typically complete every month?
- **About the products:** What kind of refinishing bathtub paint do you use? What are your color choices? Are there any warranties?
- **What to expect:** How many workers will be present during the job, and how long will it take? If you use subcontractors, do you perform background checks?

Additionally, verify that the contractor is licensed and insured. Ask for pictures of the contractor's previous work, and check the professional's references to gauge other customers' level of satisfaction.



Since you are already considering Surface Renew for your tub and tile refinishing, here's our answers to the above questions.

## **Our Background:**

We began serving Arkansas in April, 2004. We have multiple vans in the field 22 or more days per month. Each van crew does 1-2 jobs a day. You can view lots of before/after photos of our work [in our gallery](#).

## **About the Products:**

Simply put, we use only the best because we are building a business based on excellence. We want happy customers who use our service again and refer us to their friends and family. All our tools are top quality too.

## **What to Expect:**

- We send 1 or 2 workers depending on the size of the job.
- All our workers are employees driving company vans and using company equipment.
- We do not use subcontractors.
- We perform background checks on all new hires.
- And include rigorous training with ongoing training and support.

The time to complete a job depends on the scope of work. For example you can expect our workers to complete a regular tub refinishing project in about 3-4 hours. If we are refinishing all the surfaces in your entire bathroom (such as sinks, wall tile, tub, etc.) then we might be there all day.

## 7) Cost to Refinish a Bathtub



**Typical Range: \$329 - \$595**

Arkansas Average: **\$490**

National Average: **\$460**

Typical Range: **\$329 - \$595**

Low End - High End: **\$200 - \$900**

\* Cost data is based on actual project costs as reported by 5,362 HomeAdvisor.com members.

**Surface Renew Average: \$395**

Some tubs start as low as \$295.

Want an accurate quote for your specific project? [Contact us!](#)

## 8) Best Value



Hopefully you've found this handy guide helpful to you. If you have any questions or comments please reach out and let us know.

If you have an old tub and decide to have professional refinishing, then the end result might be a higher quality finish than what you can do yourself. Might also look better than any replacement you buy new.

Our techs can [change the color of your tile](#), tubs, sinks and counter tops to any color you want within the color spectrum. Also we can also change the texture to a variety of faux stone finishes. And that's something you probably won't be able to yourself.

You can attempt refinishing tubs yourself as there are DIY kits at big box stores. If your back gets sore easily keep in mind there's a lot of bending over and extended periods of time spent on your knees. The chemical fumes are awful while in close proximity to the work surface. So if you're extra sensitive to fumes refinishing tubs and tiles might not be something you want to do yourself.

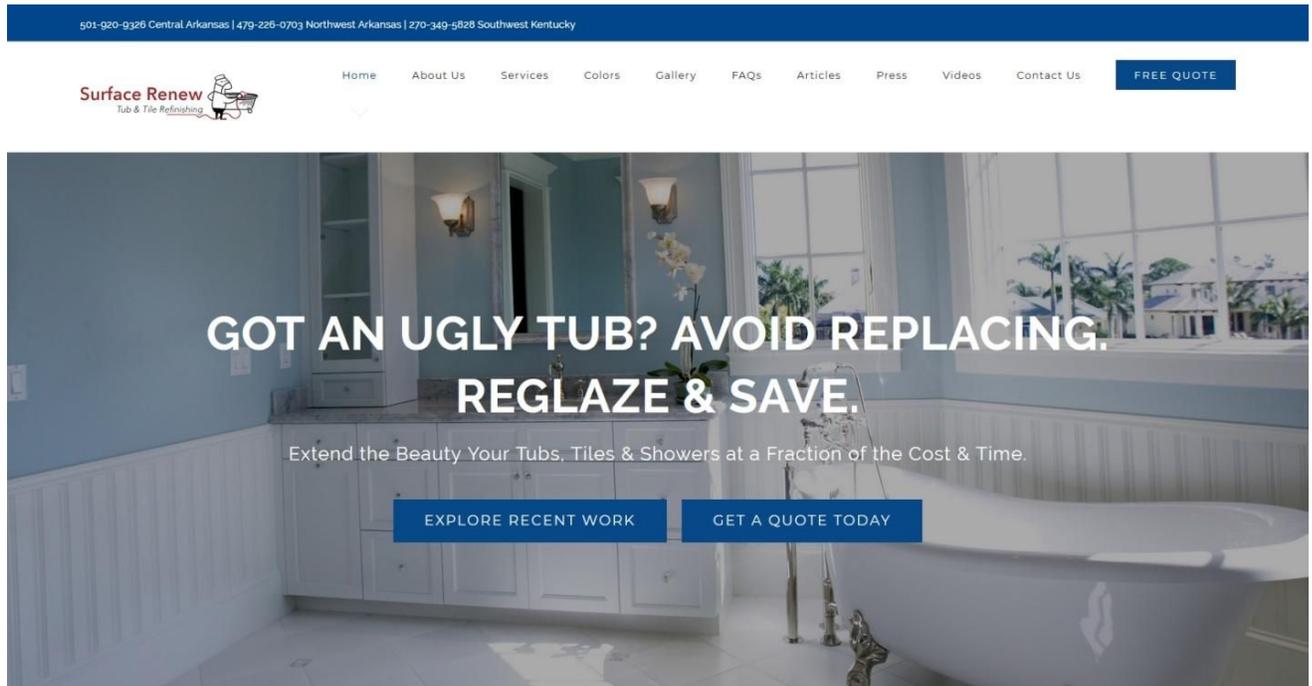
- Refinishing is far more affordable than installing a new tub.
- Be sure to weigh all the costs before deciding to do it yourself vs. hiring a professional.
- You might surprise yourself when you discover that hiring a pro is actually the better value!

We work hard to get your dingy old tub looking good as new again. Whether it's made of fiberglass, acrylic, or porcelain, we can refinish them all. The whole process is fast and easy, taking between 2 and 5 hours. And then you'll be able to use the bathtub the very next day.

*We make it easy and affordable for you to have resurfaced tubs, tiles, counters, shower with just a click or a call.*

**Contact us today for a free onsite project evaluation and a custom price quote.**

## Contact Info:



**Company:** [Surface Renew, Inc.](http://www.surface-renew.com)

**Location:** Maumelle, AR (near Little Rock). See our [service areas here](#).

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**Web:** <https://surface-renew.com>

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