



All You Need to Know About Showers, Tubs, & Whirlpools

Shower Enclosures

Most Americans identify a separate shower as something that they want to include in their next bathroom. Because of this, the variety of available shower enclosures has never been larger. Corner showers make a great use of space in smaller bathrooms. Today's showers are manufactured out of a variety of materials, from plastic to solid surface composites. The base can be surrounded by matching wall panels or a custom option of your choice.

Surrounds

Identical to shower enclosures, there are many choices available to update an existing or to build an all new alcove. Acrylic shower surround kits are a good choice for existing alcoves. They install easily, are available in a wide variety of colors, and usually include built in soap dishes, shelves, and grab bars.

Bathtubs

Basic bathtubs are usually available in both right-hand and left-hand models. To determine the handing, you indicate the location of the drain hole when you're facing the installed tub. There are four primary types of tubs: Recessed/Alcove, Corner, Drop-In, and Freestanding.

Recessed/Alcove tubs are the most common type and are only finished on the exposed side. These tubs are popular because they are space efficient and come in a variety of styles, colors and materials.

Corner bathtubs are space savers that are available in a variety of sizes and shapes, including triangular. Construction of these tubs range from acrylic to enameled cast iron.

Drop-in tubs are usually installed on a platform or sunk below floor level. They are available in a wide variety of styles and colors and most are made of acrylic, fiberglass-reinforced plastic or enameled cast iron.

Freestanding bathtubs are a good choice for adding some character to your new bathroom. Claw foot tubs are the most popular but other styles are available. These tubs create a dramatic look and are usually constructed out of cast iron or acrylic. Taking a shower in these tubs is possible, but will require a shower kit.

Whirlpools

Whirlpool tubs circulate jets of water to create massaging action. Most whirlpool tubs are made of acrylic and are designed for platform installation. While whirlpool tubs can take up a good portion of your budget, it is important to remember the added benefits of nightly relaxing and soothing spa-like massages.

Whirlpools have either water jets, air jets or both. Water jets provide the most vigorous massaging action while air jets provide a lighter massage. Pumps are an important consideration when choosing a whirlpool. Most have pumps that are built-in and are situated opposite the drain. However, some have pumps that can be remotely located to lower noise and improve service access. To control the tub many models have buttons or knobs that let you adjust the massage action, maintain water temperature, and set massage cycles.

Perhaps the most important whirlpool considerations are the special touches that make the tub your own. Whether you want strategically located jets, an in-line water heater, built-in safety bars, underwater lights, waterproof adjustable pillows, or special suction guards to keep hair from clogging up the works, your Curtis Lumber bath designer will help you pick all the special features to suit your needs.

