

FOREVER HOMES SERIES . VOL. 02

Twenty Things to Remember

*A homeowner's reference for the decisions that matter most when
building the home you intend to keep.*

RESTREPO INNOVATIONS
Serving NJ, CT, and NY

INTRODUCTION

The decisions that matter most.

Twenty notes from the work. Each one is small. Together they are the difference between a house with technology in it and a home that actually works for the next thirty years.

REFERENCE

Twenty things to remember.

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- Decide what forever actually means for your family.
- O1** Forever is not a slogan. Talk through what the next twenty to thirty years look like in this house. Children, aging parents, work-from-home, downsized rooms, future grandchildren. The answers should shape every infrastructure decision that follows.
- Bring the integrator in during design development.
- O2** Not after drywall. Not after the electrical rough. During DD and CD, when the architect is still drawing and conduit paths can be coordinated with mechanical, electrical, and plumbing. Every late-stage retrofit costs at least three times the early-stage equivalent.
- Conduit is cheaper than regret. Run extra.
- O3** Empty conduit costs pennies during framing. Pulling new conduit through a finished home costs thousands and bruises the millwork. Run more than you think you need - to every keypad, every shade pocket, every closet, every outdoor zone, every spot you might one day add a camera.
- Plan for aging in place from day one.
- O4** Lighting at the right height, low-threshold thresholds, voice control wired into the network, video intercom at every entry, panic and wellness scenes already programmed. Doing this at age 50 is invisible. Retrofitting it at 70 is anything but.

- 05 Centralize the rack room and give it room to breathe.
One dedicated, conditioned, properly ventilated room with service access on all sides of the rack. Not a closet under the stairs. Not next to the boiler. The rack room is the spine of the home for the next two decades.
- 06 Hardwire what matters; reserve wireless for what moves.
Wi-Fi is for phones, tablets, and the things that move with you. Anything that lives in one place - televisions, speakers, cameras, control processors, sensors, access points themselves - belongs on copper or fiber. Hardwire is what holds up at year fifteen.
- 07 Lighting layers matter more than fixtures.
Specifying the fixture is the last 10 percent of the conversation. The first 90 percent is layering - ambient, task, accent, decorative - and the control logic that makes those layers move together through the day. Get the layers right and the fixtures almost choose themselves.
- 08 Plan acoustics into rooms before they are framed.
Isolation between rooms, attenuation inside rooms, mechanical noise paths, double-stud walls where they matter, resilient channel where it pays off. Acoustics done in framing are nearly free. Acoustics done in finished rooms are visible and expensive.

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- 09 Network capacity should outlast the family's devices.
- IO Today's family of four runs forty to eighty connected devices. In ten years it will be twice that. Specify the network - switches, access points, cabling, uplinks - against where you will be in 2035, not where you are today.
- IO Surveillance is more than cameras; plan for coverage gaps.
- IO A camera at every door is a starting point, not a system. Plan for full perimeter coverage, side yards, pool decks, the driveway approach, the blind side of the garage. Adequate light. Adequate storage. Off-site backup. A camera the homeowner can actually find on the app.
- II Climate and shades should talk to each other.
- II Shades closing on the south face on a summer afternoon save more energy than any thermostat schedule. The integration is trivial when the control system runs both. It is impossible when they were chosen by different trades who never met.
- I2 The kitchen will be your control hub. Design accordingly.
- I2 The kitchen is where the house actually gets driven from. A keypad by the main entry, a touchscreen near the family command station, voice in the right place, intercom to the front door, scenes labeled the way the family talks - not the way the engineer talks.

- I3 Theaters and media rooms reward early commitment.
- I3 If a dedicated theater is in the program, commit to it in schematic design. Room dimensions, ceiling height, structural isolation, riser design, projector throw, screen size, HVAC routing. A theater retrofitted into a finished basement is always a compromise.
- I4 Outdoor entertainment is its own infrastructure.
- I4 Conduit out, power out, network out, drain fields planned, weatherproof enclosures, marine-grade speakers, landscape-rated cameras. Outdoor is a second house that happens to be outside. Treat it that way.
- I5 Pool, spa, gate, and driveway should integrate, not stand alone.
- I5 Each comes from a different specialist trade. Each speaks a slightly different language. Your integrator's job is to make them speak yours - one app, one scene, one voice command - rather than four apps the family will never open.
- I6 Plan for power. Clean, conditioned, backed up.
- I6 Surge protection at the service entrance. Conditioned power to the rack. Properly sized generator with automatic transfer. UPS on the critical rack so a flicker does not reboot the home. Power is the foundation everything else stands on.

- Documentation is a deliverable, not a favor.
- I7 Conduit maps, rack elevations, network diagrams, programming notes, scene definitions, and a service binder. Get it in the contract. Get it at close-out. The next contractor, designer, or homeowner who reads it will thank you and so will you.
- Choose finishes and keypads as carefully as the systems behind them.
- I8 Keypads, touchscreens, thermostats, intercom stations - these are the objects the family touches every day. They should match the design vocabulary of the home and be engraved with labels that mean something to the people who live there.
- Plan for service. The next 20 years matter more than installation week.
- I9 Ask how service is staffed. Ask who answers the phone in year five. Ask for the response time on a downed system. The installation is over in months. The relationship lasts decades. Choose accordingly.
- Test, commission, and train with the client in the room.
- 20 Final commissioning is not a back-of-house exercise. Walk every scene with the homeowner. Adjust labels, levels, and timings in front of them. Train the family. Train the housekeeper. Train the property manager. Hand off a system the people who live there can actually drive.

ABOUT RESTREPO INNOVATIONS

A practice built for the long view.

Restrepo Innovations is a luxury technology integration practice based in Franklin Lakes, New Jersey, serving forever homes across NJ, CT, and NY. Our four divisions - residential, commercial, hospitality, and military/government - share one standard of work and one standard of documentation. Our leadership team brings 20+ years of combined experience to every home we touch.

FOUR DIVISIONS

Residential . Commercial . Hospitality . Military/Government

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