

Getting Ready to **Finish Your Basement!**

*F*inishing your basement can increase the living space in your home at a fraction of the price of constructing a new addition. Structurally, the floor, walls and ceiling are already in place – so it's just a matter of finishing them to make it livable.

Basement[®]
Systems
Basement Environment Specialists[®]



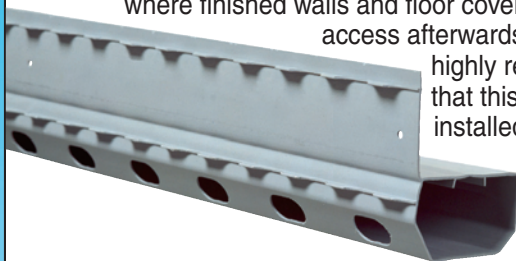
However, the first concern before finishing your basement is keeping it dry. This means protecting your basement not only from flooding, but from water vapor as well. A wet, or even just damp basement is unsuitable for finishing. Moisture will get into the building materials and cause mold, mildew, rot, unpleasant odors, and damage to floor coverings, furniture, and personal items.

Basement Systems is the world leader in keeping basements dry. We have seen tens of thousands of finished and unfinished basements with water problems ranging from dampness to all-out flooding. If you are going to finish your basement, this is what we recommend to prepare your basement properly. If you already have finished your basement, the majority of these precautions can still be made.



1. An Effective Waterproofing System -

If the basement has ever experienced any groundwater seepage at all, then it needs a quality basement waterproofing system like WaterGuard, DryTrak or others available from Basement Systems. The idea is that basement water problems never get better, they only get worse as the house ages, as the drains and coatings that protected the house fail. Therefore, even if water seepage is a once a year occurrence, it needs to be fixed before the basement is finished, as flooding is likely to be more frequent afterwards. Some cautious homeowners put in such a system even if they have not had seepage, just in case. This makes sense from the standpoint that these systems are far easier to put in a basement that is unfinished than one where finished walls and floor coverings restricts access afterwards. It is also highly recommended that this system be installed around the entire perimeter of the basement.



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2. Sump Pumps - Back-up Systems & Alarms

- Before investing in finishing your basement, you should have the best sump pump protection available to guard your home against flooding from primary pump failure, pump overload from torrential rains, and power failure. Basement Systems' TripleSafe sump pump system stands ready with primary and secondary AC-powered pumps and a third battery-operated back-up pump in a single airtight sump liner. The TripleSafe system automatically pumps out water in the event that the power goes out or the primary pump mechanically fails to operate. Without this triple protection, your finished basement is only one pump or power failure away from a flood. Ensure a dry basement all the time with triple protection - before you invest in it.



TripleSafe™

Clean looking airtight lid

If you do not have a TripleSafe pump system and have a Base-

ment Systems' SuperSump instead, at the very minimum you should have an UltraSump back-up pumping system and a WaterWatch Alarm. The UltraSump (standard with a TripleSafe system) is a battery-operated back-up pumping system with a DC pump installed in the same sump hole, a battery, and a charging system. The UltraSump will pump up to 11,000 gallons of water out of your basement in the event of the primary pump failing for any reason including power outages. A WaterWatch Alarm is standard on all Basement Systems pump systems and will sound off to alert you to pump failure before your floor gets wet.



3. Guard Against Floods from Frozen Sump Discharge Lines.

- If you have a sump pump, it probably discharges outside. Snow and ice can block the opening and cause it to freeze. Now your pump will be running and the water can't get out, and your basement will flood. Basement Systems IceGuard, which is standard on most systems, automatically prevents this problem.

4. Install a Vapor Barrier

on the walls before you put up finished walls. Basement walls can leak higher up off of the floor. Water vapor can pass through basement walls and contribute to a high humidity level in the basement. Installing a sheet of plastic, preferably a high quality very durable one, will direct water seepage down to the drainage system below and keep the studs and sheetrock or paneling dry. It will also keep water vapor from getting into the basement environment and lower the humidity levels. It is important that the vapor barrier be tucked into the drainage system below if there is one. The top of the vapor barrier should be caulked to the top of the wall. Even better you can install a vapor-proof drainage sheet on the walls with insulating properties, such as Basement Systems ThermalDry Wall System, which reflects 97% of the heat back into your basement.



5. Keep the floor warm, dry and comfortable.

Once you have eliminated any possible leakage problems in the basement, the next thing to eliminate is water vapor from coming through the concrete floor.

Because concrete is porous, water vapor will slowly and continuously travel up through it. If you lay a carpet on top of the concrete floor, this moisture gets trapped under the carpet and causes odors, mold and rot in the carpet.



Basement Systems solution is a ThermalDry Basement Floor Matting system. This consists of a specially engineered polypropylene, 12-inch tongue-&-groove square tile that, unlike systems that use wood, is totally water and vapor proof. The unique grid design on the bottom of the tile creates an air space that insulates the floor, and does not cause water vapor to condense. The installation takes away only ¼” of precious ceiling height in the basement, instead of 4” for other methods.

6. Protect against common plumbing leaks from ruining your finished basement.

Any water leakage, whether it be from the ground or not, will have the same damaging effect on your finished basement. Basement Systems has easy solutions for the two most common domestic water leaks, which we see all the time.

The first is leaking water heaters. The average life of a water heater is seven years, and when they fail, they usually leak and flood the basement. Basement Systems FloodRing is the solution. The FloodRing contains water seepage and drains it to the waterproofing system when the water heater leaks.

The second common plumbing leak is from washing machine hoses, which can flood your basement even if the washing machine is on the upper floors. These hoses are not made to withstand the 50 or 60 pounds-per-square-inch of water pressure exerted on them. There is a valve to shut the water pressure off of these hoses when the washing machine is not in use, but



very few people use it all the time. Eventually, these inexpensive hoses leak or blow out. Basement Systems FloodChek hoses are the answer.

Guaranteed for 20 years, the FloodChek hoses are made to take the pressure and will not blow out, corrode, or rust at the end connections.



7. Basement Windows

- Inspect your basement windows. Will you be happy with them in your newly finished basement? Basement windows are notorious for being hard to open and drafty. Furthermore, the wet environment near the ground or in a window well causes a metal window to rust and a wood window to rot. Many do not have screens, and painting them is a constant challenge.



Basement Systems can replace your basement windows with energy efficient, all-vinyl windows.



They feature smooth sliding operation, double glass, full screens, and easily removable panes for cleaning or passing long objects into the basement – and they never need to be painted!

The right time to replace your basement windows is before you finish the basement. Then the carpenters can trim right up to them and finish them off nice.

8. Dehumidify the space.

SaniDry Basement Air System is a powerful and effective dehumidifier – big enough to do the job. It dries the air and automatically drains the water out of the hose, so you never have to empty it, unlike a conventional dehumidifier. The SaniDry will take three times the amount of water out of the air as a typical dehumidifier, yet uses the same energy. The SaniDry has a powerful blower to draw musty air in and move the dry, clean air back out into the basement. This unit ensures you won't have high humidity and musty smells in your finished basement.



9. Exterior Maintenance.

You should have your downspouts extended with Basement Systems RainChute to keep roof water away from the foundation. Keep the soil graded away from the house wherever possible, and keep the gutters clean. Keep window wells clear of leaves and debris.



Preparing to Finish Your Basement Checklist-

- Waterproofing System
- Battery Back-up Pump & Alarm
- Pump Discharge Won't Freeze
- Vapor Barrier on Walls
- ThermalDry Flooring
- Water Heater & Washing Machine Hoses Protected
- Windows
- Dehumidification
- Downspouts Extended, Gutters & Window Wells Cleaned

Choosing a Contractor to Finish Your Basement

When looking around for a contractor to finish your basement, do not look for the lowest price. Instead, seek out a contractor you can trust, who has a history of reliability and finishing jobs on time. Get references and call them. Be sure the contractor is not overloaded with work and that once they start the project that they will stay on your job until it is done.

Meet with the contractor more than once, to make sure you feel comfortable with them. Also, make sure the contractor returns your phone calls and is easy to communicate with.



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For more information, contact your local Basement Systems dealer.

Your Basement Systems Dealer can help you with the above concerns. Once you take care of these things, you are ready to call the carpenters! Their job will be easier, and your finished basement will be protected from damaging water and moisture – giving you peace of mind – and a beautiful finished basement!