

Whether your home improvement project is large or small, it's important to find a good, reliable contractor.



A good contractor is the “foundation” of any home improvement or construction project!

Spring is Coming... It's Time for a Home Improvement Project!

Here's How to Hire a Reliable Contractor

Finding a contractor you can trust is no small task. Here's what you need to know to find the perfect pro for your project.

While the size of your project will go a long way in determining how involved your search is, there are things to do and questions to ask when hiring a contractor.

Get Referrals

Starting your search by getting recommendations is one of the quickest ways to narrow down your list of potential contractors. Reach out to friends and family members, head down to your local home improvement center, and take advantage of the free rating and reviews offered by many Home Improvement Internet sites.

Do Your Research

Once you've made your list, call each contractor and ask them if they take on projects your size, if they have the time

and resources available to complete your project, how long they've been in business and whether they're licensed and insured. If they give you the answers you're looking for, ask them for references and set up an in-home consultation. During their visit pay attention to how well they communicate. Given the amount of time you'll be interacting with them, you want to be able to trust that you'll be able to work together without issue.

Crunch the Numbers & Seal the Deal

Once you have your estimates in hand, review them with each contractor to ensure that the scope of their work and fees are in line with your project needs. As a rule of thumb, you'll want to get at least three estimates for your project. Some experts recommend that you throw out the lowest estimate since a

low-ball bid means that the contractor is desperate for work and/or possibly cutting corners.

Once you select your contractor you need to establish a payment schedule. For large jobs, contractors typically require 10% up front, 25% spread out over three payments during the project, and 15% upon completion. Be wary of any contractor who requires a 50% deposit at the beginning of a project.

Finally, draw up a contract that outlines the project scope, start and completion dates, materials to be used, deliverables, and payment schedule. Make sure the contractor signs it before starting any work. Always review the contracts with your Architect and Attorney before signing. Remember, never pay cash, always pay by check or credit card to keep record of payments as the project proceeds, ask for a receipt at each stage of payments made and never pay the final balance until you are fully satisfied with the finished product.

Final Thoughts

Finding and hiring a contractor doesn't have to be a painful process. With a little due diligence and an understanding of what to ask and what to expect, you'll be able to find the perfect pro for your project.



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