

7 Tips for Hiring the Right Professional



A good contractor is hard to find

The hardest part of a home remodel might be finding the right contractor. Often getting the best one for your home, the true pro who shows up and delivers quality work on time and on budget depends on doing some serious screening **before the job even starts.**

Slow down and take your time

You're not ordering a cup of coffee to go, he says. This is a home alteration that you're going to live with every day for many years to come.

The best thing to do before you start interviewing contractors is educate yourself on the project, he advises. The more you know, the more able you'll be to ask savvy questions and make smart decisions concerning the project.

Determine the contractor's specialty

Look for someone who focuses on homes that are the same age and style as yours.

While a contractor may have more than one specialty, you want to make sure that your type of home is one of the contractor's strong suits.

Confirm Licenses, Insurance, and Bonding

For most home remodelers, obtaining and maintaining state-issued contractor licenses is mandatory.

If required by law, the remodelers you consider for your project should hold any and all necessary business licenses – no exceptions! They should also carry certain types of insurance.

Identify and Mitigate Health and Safety Concerns

Parents and pet owners often worry that remodelers work with hazardous indoor pollutants. These concerns are completely justified. Many remodeling teams do work with toxic building materials. Not only should you be aware of the chemicals contractors are using, but you should ask what steps they will take to protect you and your family from undue exposure.

Talk to friends and neighbors

Referrals are a primary source for finding a good contractor. Then follow up with your own due diligence. Make sure the contractor is the best fit.

Do your part on the other end of the referral process, too. When you do find someone great make sure to tell everyone!

Make a good match

You want to get to know the person. Ask about his or her experience, life history, specialties, and what work he or she really loves to do.

Also cover the nuts and bolts: Is the contractor licensed? Insured? Do they have references?

Ask About HOA Compliance

If you live in a condominium or house that is subject to homeowners' association (HOA) standards, confirm that prospective remodelers are able to follow the rules. HOAs typically regulate any remodel that modifies common property.



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