

CHECKLIST FINDING & HIRING THE RIGHT CONTRACTOR



Doing your research upfront is the single most important step that you can take before entering into a contract to have work performed by a contractor. When starting your next project use this checklist to help you make your decision.

✓ **Are they members of a Builders Association?**

Association members are respected professionals in their communities that pledge to a Code of Ethics, are committed to service and integrity with every project. Your local builders association is the best place to start your search.

✓ **How long have they been in business?**

It typically takes 3-5 years to establish a financially sound business. Will they be around after the construction is complete to service any warranties?

✓ **Will they provide you with references?**

Ask the builder/remodeler to provide you with names of previous customers. If they won't, beware. If they do, ask the customers if they would hire the builder/remodeler again.

✓ **Have you seen their work - both completed and in progress?**

Ask to see their work, both completed and in progress. Check for quality of workmanship and materials.

✓ **Do you feel you can easily communicate with the builder/remodeler?**

Remember you will be in close contact with them throughout your project and possibly afterwards.

✓ **Will they provide a clearly written contract?**

Make sure the builder/remodeler provides you with a complete and clearly written contract. The contract will benefit both of you. If you are having a new home built, get and review a copy of the home warranty and homeowner manual as well.

✓ **Did they bid the lowest? Did you get more than one bid?**

Be cautious of unusually low-priced bids. If the builder/remodeler is unable to pay for the materials and labor as the project proceeds, this may indicate a potential problem. Keep in mind that less expensive does not necessarily mean better! ALWAYS get more than one bid!

✓ **Do they build to the PA state building code? Can they provide proof of workers comp and general liability insurance?**

Ask your contractor if he/she builds to the Pennsylvania state-wide building code. Also, ask if his/her subcontractors also build to this code. Remember, it's the law. Ask for an insurance certificate to verify current workers' compensation and general liability insurance.

