



8 Tips for Hiring a Good Contractor

Everyone has heard their share of contractor horror stories. You can protect against becoming a victim of an unethical contractor by following a few simple tips before you sign on the dotted line.

1. Ask family, network of friends, and neighbors for referrals.
2. Only hire a contractor who has a valid California contractor's license and insurance, including worker's compensation insurance and construction defect liability insurance. You can verify valid licenses by visiting the California Contractors State Licensing Board website at www.cslb.ca.gov
3. Check with the California Contractors State Licensing Board for complaints, violations and litigation reports at www.cslb.ca.gov
4. Contact your local Better Business Bureau www.bbb.org to run a complaint check.
5. Obtain at least three written bids. Remember to inquire about their availability and experience, and determine if their work pattern fits with your schedule.
6. Check references and call at least three past customers. Visit any current job sites and inspect the quality of work.
7. Get everything in writing.
 - a. A written contract include a start date, the scope of the work specifying exactly what's included, any house rules you set, and payment terms (insist that you be allowed to hold back at least 25% until the job is finished).
 - b. Make sure you get specific materials and quality of products outlined in the contract, as well as a timeline for completion of phases of the project with bench marks for compensation.
8. Be wary if the contractor doesn't belong to any professional or business organizations. Most professional organizations require adherence to a code of ethics or code of conduct as a condition of membership.