

Finding the Contractor that is Right for You

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The Search

- Know what the needs, wants and priorities are of your project.
 - Consider how you want to do business (time & materials; cost-plus; traditional design-build-bid; or design/build).
 - Know your budget.
 - Ask trusted sources for recommendations.
 - Research reviews and the contractor's website. Note what association or affiliations they maintain in the industry.
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The Phone Call

- Describe your project.
 - Learn how they do business.
 - Understand which Project Delivery System they use:
 - Time & Materials or Cost Plus (a percentage)
 - Traditional Design-Bid-Build
 - Design/Build (collaborative approach)
 - Ask the contractor:
 - What is the make-up and experience of the crew and how long have they worked together?
 - Request a copy of their certificate of insurance and license, where applicable.
 - What are they doing by way of continued education in building science, materials and business courses?
 - Ask for referrals. Ask their past clients:
 - How did the process go for them?
 - Were they happy with the outcome?
 - Did the contractor's workers respect your personal requests?
 - What were the subcontractors like?
 - How did the contractor resolve conflicts?
 - Set up a meeting and ensure that there will be an agenda. Topics can include:
 - Meeting time, expected duration, and how interruptions will be handled
 - Project description and key items for discussion
 - Time frame needed for the project and/or time constraints
 - Discussion on the financial investment for the project
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The First Date

- Discuss what will happen at the meeting based on the agenda.
- Take a tour of the home areas to be affected.
- Discuss how the process will work. For example:
 - Do you need design and drawings? Does the contractor provide same?
 - How do they conduct business during both the design and build phases?
 - Do they have weekly meetings?
 - Do they have a plan to minimize overruns?
 - What are their standard operating procedures for protecting elements of the home not being worked on (i.e. dust control, floor protection, new product protection etc.)?
 - How have they handled problems when they've come up? (ask for a past example)
- Saying no/saying yes: when you have chosen your contractor, decide what the next step will be.
- Jot down notes from the meeting and distribute to parties involved.

