

- Licensed; current complaints or actions against them within the past 3 years [REJECT]
- Contractor has no license [REJECT]

**Insurance (ask to see their certificates):**

- Workman's Compensation and General Liability [**BEST**]
- General Liability only (bodily injury and property damage) [GOOD]
- Contractor has no insurance [REJECT]

**Business Longevity:**

- In business more than 10 years with the same name [**BEST**]
- In business 5 or more years with the same name [GOOD]
- In business 1 to 5 years with the same name [OK]
- New business under 1 year [FAIR]

**Stability and Permanence:**

- Has a physical business office and address [**BEST**]
- Has only a Home office or answering service [FAIR]
- Cell phone contact only, no office [REJECT]

**Reference Check (yes, you should check references)**

- Positive prior current references from at least 5 customers [**BEST**]
- 1 to 4 positive references from past customers [FAIR]
- No real references or negative references provided [REJECT]

**Experience**

- Specializes in the work you want performed [**BEST**]
- Can perform the work you want but also does other types of work [OK]
- Little to no experience in the work you want performed [REJECT]

**Scope and Price: (All Items are Required)**

- Detailed description of the scope of work
- Assumptions (if any) are clear and accurate
- Contractor DID NOT offer discount to “sign up now”
- Contractor will Guarantee the work
- All verbal Contractor representations are in writing
- No more than 25% to 33% asked for up front
- Final payment not required until work is complete



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## **Selecting a Contractor**

By Bob Formisano, About.com

**How To Select a Good Contractor** This may seem daunting but it's really pretty straightforward. A good tip I can give you is try to select contractors you may need on an urgent basis before you need them. Why? Because if you have an emergency repair and need to find someone quickly (who is also good and fair) you don't have time to go through a lengthy selection process. And the WORST thing you can ever do is picking someone from the Yellow Pages without interviewing them first. I'm not talking about getting a bid for work you don't need, but try to at least get the names before you need them of some well recommended emergency contractors, like a plumbing or heating contractor.

The easiest, and one of the best ways to select a possible contractor, is to get references from friends, family or a Realtor you trust. Please, do not just use the "Yellow pages" and hire someone.

Once you have some names, meet with them, look for "chemistry" or rapport between you and them and observe their level of professionalism. Courtesy, respect, punctuality and the ability to communicate are some of the most important attributes a contractor can have next to their basic competency. Actually, no matter how good someone is, if they don't click with you on these points, don't hire them. Period.

I'm sorry to say that I have to suggest you should also be observant for signs of substance abuse such as alcohol or marijuana. If you suspect anything here, do not hire the contractor.

### **Checklist of things to consider when selecting your contractor.**

#### **Getting Names of Possible Contractors:**

- You have had good personal prior experience working with contractor [**BEST**]
- Reliable referral from direct experience of family or friends [**GOOD**]
- You know of the contractor's reputation but have no direct experience [**OK**]
- You found them from a trade association or general advertising [**FAIR**]

#### **State Contractor Licensing** (they must provide the number if licensed):

- Licensed; has never had a complaint filed or had disciplinary action taken [**BEST**]
- Licensed; has no prior complaints filed for at least 3 or more years [**FAIR**]