



contractor interview

You will want to gather as much information as you can from potential contractors before making your decision. The potential contractor should walk through the project with you - this is your opportunity to assess the contractor's experience, work ethic, and personal demeanor.

- 1. Make sure the contractor has the appropriate business and professional licenses and is insured.**
Once you have signed a contract, you should request a copy of the contractor's "insurance binder" that lists the specific coverages for your project. Save this sheet of paper with the contract and don't lose them.
- 2. Get all the contact information you can.**
Write down the contractor's business address, cell phone, telephone, fax, e-mail address, business license number, and truck license plate. If something goes wrong during the project, you need to be able to make contact. Before signing a contract, look up the business at the Better Business Bureau web site (<http://www.stlouis.bbb.org/search.html>). Complaints lodged with the BBB should not necessarily exclude the contractor, but may lead you to ask some specific questions and/or write some additional language into a contract.
- 3. Ask the contractor to describe similar projects he/she has worked on.**
Get two or three recent references and call them. Don't trust photos the contractor brings as your only source of information.
- 4. Make the contractor aware of any individual requirements and issues with your project.**
Ask if the contractor can work within whatever guidelines you set.
- 5. Ask about project management.**
Who will be working on the job? Will there be a supervisor, superintendent or lead carpenter on site or will it be managed from a different location?
- 6. Inquire about timing.**
How much lead-time does the contractor need to schedule your project once the contract is signed? How long does the contractor anticipate the project taking?
- 7. Ask about the contractor's bidding process.**
What will be included in the bid? What is specifically excluded?
- 8. Was the contractor on time to the meeting?**
Did he or she call to let you know about any delays?
- 9. Ask about the contractor's business.**
How many projects are completed in a year? Does the contractor have an office? How long has the contractor been in business? How many employees are there?



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10. How are complaints or differences of opinion typically resolved?

Does the contractor have an established punchlist system? Does the contractor warranty his or her work? Is there an arbitration clause in the contract?

11. Ask about payment.

How much money does the contractor require up front? What is the payment schedule? Can the contractor agree to the lender's terms and the required draw schedule?