

13 Steps to Hiring a Contractor

- Seek a referral from someone you know who is happy with his or her contractor's work
- Solicit bids from at least three contractors
- Be wary of proposals that are much lower than any other proposals
- Contact the Better Business Bureau to check out any contractors that submit bids
- Insist on a written contract that outlines your entire agreement, including starting and completing dates
- Have an attorney review any documents before you sign them, including contracts, warranties, and plans
- Make sure there are no blank spaces on anything you sign
- Insist upon a written warranty on all materials and work
- Get all building permits and variances before starting the project – and identify the contractor on the applications
- Inspect all work before signing a completion certificate
- Withhold final payment until the entire project is finished and inspected
- Get a contractor's affidavit that all subcontractors and material suppliers have been paid before making final payment
- Report any misrepresentations, shoddy work, failure to honor contracts, unlicensed contractors, or other problems to the appropriate licensing board