

Universal Design Products Checklist for Hiring a Contractor

Family and Consumer Sciences, Universal Design, The Ohio State University, fcs.osu.edu/resources/universal-design

As you consider hiring a contractor to do your home alterations, review these questions. Look over the list and answer them BEFORE you decide on a contractor. *Use these questions to ask some questions of those you interview about taking the job.* Also, ask the contractor for references and check the references before making the final decision.

After you mark each item as YES or NO, record the total number you marked for each. The next step is to go back and turn the No's into Yes's. Then you are ready to hire a contractor.

YES NO

- | | | |
|-------|-------|--|
| _____ | _____ | Have you selected a professional with a solid reputation in the community and who can provide you with references from previous jobs? |
| _____ | _____ | Did you follow up and talk with those references? (You might want to check with your mortgage officer, local housing authority, local building inspectors, material suppliers, or the Better Business Bureau.) |
| _____ | _____ | Is this professional established and do they have several years of past experience in the type of work your project entails? |
| _____ | _____ | Will this professional be accessible if problems arise after the job is completed? |
| _____ | _____ | Does this professional have a good credit record and the ability to pay subcontractors and material suppliers? Does this professional carry adequate insurance? |
| _____ | _____ | Did you get at least three written bids from reliable contractors before making a choice? (<i>Note: the lowest bid is not necessarily the best bid.</i>) |



Do you have a written agreement with the professional that includes the following:

- | YES | NO | |
|-----|-----|---|
| ___ | ___ | Full description of the work to be completed? |
| ___ | ___ | Description of type and quality of materials? |
| ___ | ___ | Acceptance of liability and agreement to obtain needed permits and meet codes, on the part of the professional? |
| ___ | ___ | Time frame of project? |
| ___ | ___ | Payment schedule? |
| ___ | ___ | Agreement to free homeowners from liens against the professional? |
| ___ | ___ | Warranty of work? |
| ___ | ___ | Have you agreed that the final payment to the professional will not be made until the work is satisfactorily completed? |
| ___ | ___ | Have you and the professional agreed on what parts of the remodeling project you will do yourself? |
| ___ | ___ | If you are financing the work through a home improvement loan, have you had the contract checked by an attorney, your mortgage company, or your bank? |
| ___ | ___ | TOTALS |

Source: Phillips, R.G., Eubank, W., Brent, R.S. and Megrew, M.B., *Remodeling: The Decision-Making Process*, University Extension, University of Missouri-Columbia, 1988.

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