



9 TIPS FOR AN **AWESOME** CONTRACTOR EXPERIENCE

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW TO
AVOID A CONTRACTOR DISASTER!

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MAKE AN EMPOWERED HIRING DECISION!

This book was written to empower homeowners to make a good decision when hiring a contractor to do roofing, siding or windows.

It is unfortunate that the remodeling industry has a bad reputation. Most of us have seen or read news stories about the horrible experience that people had because they were taken advantage of by a bad contractor.

I have been in the remodeling industry for over 30 years and I know that there are many outstanding companies who give great service to their customers. I am confident that this book will help you to find one of the good ones and avoid one of the bad ones. By reading this book you are already ahead of the game, please be a wise consumer and take the time to do your research, you will be glad you did.





LOOKING BACKSTAGE

Over the years I have spoken first hand with many smart people that were ripped off by a dishonest contractor. Every time there is one common theme - the frontstage always looks good.

"The salesman was so nice"

"I checked their reviews"

"They have such a nice website"

"They have even won several awards"

This book will help you to pull back the curtain and go backstage in the world of home improvements so that you can see if the company you are considering hiring is dishonest. Do the research to protect yourself! You are spending a lot of money and your home is an important investment.

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TIP #1

COME UP WITH A FAIR DOWN PAYMENT

There is nothing wrong with a contractor asking for and receiving a down payment from the homeowner. There are several reasons why the contractor will want to collect a down payment.

The amount will vary depending on the circumstances.

The contractor will want a down payment to secure your place on their schedule. What is a fair amount? To be fair to your contractor, ask to set up a payment schedule that he/she is comfortable with. Perhaps you will agree to make another payment when the materials are delivered and the work begins? Perhaps you can make another payment when the work is half complete? Be agreeable to work out a payment plan that is good for both of you.

Make sure that you are fair and reasonable so that you get off to a good start with your contractor.

The most important thing is that neither party should get way ahead in the balance of money that has been paid and the amount of work that has been done. You should not expect your contractor to do all of the work without getting paid.

There are times when a much larger down payment is necessary. For example, your contractor may order custom size windows or kitchen cabinets that are made specifically for your home. In that case the contractor is justified in receiving perhaps a 50% down payment because if you were to back out the windows would be almost worthless. Be very careful in this situation, make sure you are dealing with a reputable company.

This may be the most important point that you will read in this book. I have talked to many people who are desperately seeking to recover money from a contractor who has disappeared or has gone out of business.





TIP #2

SEEK OUT THIRD PARTY REVIEWS

We all know that reviews are important but how do you make sure that they are legitimate?

For starters, never trust reviews that are listed on the company's website. Check out a trusted third party source such as one of the following;

Check reviews on Google, The Better Business Bureau, Facebook, and Nextdoor, these are all free and reliable platforms to check. If you do not know how to find the reviews you can ask a friend to help you with it. Be diligent to spend some time on this, it is very important.

Look carefully at their reviews - do the reviews go back five, ten or more years? If a company says they have been in business for 12 years and they only have reviews going back for two years that is suspect.

Read their bad reviews. Everyone makes mistakes but in the end did the company make it right for the homeowner?

Is it smart for you to spend tens of thousands of dollars with a company that has only a handful of reviews? Look for a company that has a good history and many reviews from happy customers.



nextdoor





Complaint

TIP #3

CHECK THE BETTER BUSINESS BUREAU

Look up the company at the BBB. Here you will see if the company has had any complaints filed, and you can also see how long the company has been in business.

The BBB also has a section where you can check reviews.

Does the number of years in business listed with the BBB line up with what the company stated for how long they have been in business?



<https://www.bbb.org/us/mn>



TIP #4

VERIFY WITH THE MINNESOTA SECRETARY OF STATE

When you are considering hiring a company, look them up at the Minnesota Secretary of State.

This will tell you a lot about when the company started, where they are located and who the owner is. Every company should be registered, if they are not listed here then stay away from them.

1. To do this go to <https://www.sos.state.mn.us/>
2. At the top of the page, hover over 'Business and Liens'
3. Click on 'Business Filings Online'
4. Enter in the name of the company and click search

Is the company's business address the same at the Sec of State, BBB and their own website?



TIP #5

DRIVE BY A CURRENT JOB SITE

As stated previously, the company will almost always send out a presentable sales rep. But things can look a lot different when the guys show up to work on your home.

Think of grimy looking guys that show up in a rusty van to work on your home. Or a crew that drinks beer while they work and urinate in your bushes - yikes!

Before signing the contract, ask the company if you can drive by one of their current job sites. Ask to see the crew that will be working on your home if you choose this company. A reputable company will be proud and happy to show off the people that represent them.



TIP #6

BE WARY OF FAKE ACCOLADES

Don't be fooled by fake awards that are listed on companies websites. Many awards are just paid for advertising and very little was done to earn that award.

Many affiliations such as "certified contractor" are handed out to almost any contractor that applies for it.

This type of marketing does not mean that the contractor is bad. Many high quality contractors will show awards and affiliations on their website. Don't put too much faith in this, do your research to make sure that everything else looks good.



TIP #7

WATCH OUT FOR STORM CHASERS

Storm chasers have a bad reputation. That being said, not all storm chasers are bad.

The main thing you want to make sure of is that they are a local company. Many companies will go to great lengths to look like they are local when in reality they are from out of town. This can put you in a difficult position if you have a problem a few years later and they have moved on.

Generally speaking it is better to call a company that you have researched and chosen, rather than go with someone who just happened to knock on your door. The important thing is to do due diligence in/on the other steps that have been outlined in this book.



TIP #8

UNDERSTANDING YOUR FINANCING OPTIONS

Many high pressure companies throw in financing offers to help close the deal.

Don't focus too much on a great financing offer and the benefit of low payments. Many times the products that the company uses are cheaply made. Look out for inferior windows or bad vinyl siding.

Many contractors offer financing. There is nothing wrong with getting financing through your contractor, just be careful that the rest of the package is high quality.

Sometimes a contractor will offer a discount if you do not want to use their financing but you may need to ask for it to get it.



TIP #9

ASK FOR WARRANTY DETAILS

It is important that you understand what is meant by the words LIFETIME WARRANTY.

There are usually two types of warranties that will come with your project, the labor warranty and the manufacturer's warranty.

Labor Warranty - the labor warranty is just what it says. It covers the work that the people do on your project. Many contractors offer a one, two, five, ten year or a lifetime labor warranty. This labor warranty will not cover any of the materials.

Manufacturer's Warranty - the manufacturer's warranty is from the manufacturer of the products used on the job. For example, if you are getting a

new roof, the shingle manufacturer will provide this warranty on their materials. If you are getting new windows, the window manufacturer provides this warranty on their windows.

This warranty will not cover any of the labor. Many times the contractor will say they offer a “lifetime warranty” when what they really mean is the manufacturer is offering a lifetime warranty on the materials.

Ask the contractor to explain the details of the warranty.



HIRE A CONTRACTOR YOU REALLY TRUST

We know finding a contractor you can trust for your roofing, siding, or window-replacement project can be a stressful experience.

At Craftsmen Home Improvements, we believe in total transparency to earn your trust. We'll give you all the information you need up front to make an empowered decision about your project — even if you decide not to hire us. Plus, we offer a lifetime labor warranty to give you extra peace of mind. Go into your remodel confident that your home will be a valuable asset and beautiful place to live for many years to come.

The process is simple:

- **Schedule a free estimate:**
We'll meet in your home or virtually to discuss your options and make a plan to move forward.
- **Put our team to work:**
We'll let you know what to expect throughout the installation process and keep you up to date throughout our work.
- **Make yourself at home:**
Settle into your newly remodeled home satisfied you made the best possible decision.

Are you ready to start?

GET A FREE ESTIMATE

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