

Contractor Checklist

Remodeling has the 2nd highest consumer complaints of any industry in America, only beaten by car dealerships that have much more transactions than remodelers:

<https://phxhomeremodeling.com/why-contractors-2nd-most-consumer-complaints/>

The questions below will help increase the chance of you NOT being one of those above statistics.

Remodel Contractor Company Name:	Contractor #1:	Contractor #2:	Contractor #3:	Why the question is important for you to ask
INITIAL RESEARCH PHASE:				
Did they do a 1st call to ensure it was worth both of your time before doing an in-home evaluation?				If they are willing to come see your house before they even know if it is a good fit for you or their company, they are wasting both of your time. If they don't value their own time, how could they possibly value another person's time?
Do they seem organized and process minded?				Construction is a very process intensive field. If they are not organized and process-oriented, you are going to have a nightmare remodel project ahead of you.
Is their portfolio of past projects easy to find and show quality craftsmanship?				If they have limited photos of their finished projects, how do you know they have quality work? A referral from a friend or family isn't enough.
Did you check out their reviews on 3rd party websites?				This is VERY important to ensure that their clients are happy. Reading the reviews will tell you a lot about the company.
Did you check if their License is up to date and if any complaints here: https://roc.az.gov				There are numerous people who have been fooled by a contractor showing a fake license. I spoke to someone in April 2018 who ended up being on ABC15 news Oct 2018 for the shady remodeler giving a fake license and insurance.
Is the company a "one man band"?				We are all human with day to day challenges. Kid gets sick, owner gets sick or injured. Another job needs their immediate attention. So many things that can pull that one or 2 person business away from your project getting completed. What if that one person working on your project gets injured and can't complete your job? Do they hire someone new and you are their guinea pig?
Does their company name consist of "Glass", "Carpet", "Countertops", "Handyman", "Flooring"?				If their company name has one of those words in it, there's a chance they haven't been doing remodels for a while or that they don't specialize in remodeling. I know of many companies that start to get into remodeling to make more money but they don't have the expertise. You want an expert when doing serious projects like kitchen or bathroom remodels.
AT THE IN-HOME VISIT:				
Did they appear to value your time and their own time?				If they don't seem to value your time or theirs this early in the process how could they value your time or theirs when the project is going on?
Were they friendly and easy to talk to?				Remodeling is a relationship and communication based service. If you can't easily discuss things with your remodeler, that will make it difficult throughout the entire process.
When they came for the in-home, were they presentable and on time?				This is a big red flag if they can't show up on time to give you a quote. If they don't show up on time to try and get your business how frustrating is it going to be when you have to call them for showing up late on the project or not at all? Did they give an advanced courtesy call/text if they are running late?
Did they appear like they personally have their act together?				Even though contract work can be a "dirty job", this shouldn't affect whether or not they appear professional. If it appears that they don't respect themselves, are they going to respect you or your house?

Did they seem like they will respect you and your home?				If they don't respect you and your home this early on, what will it be like when they demolish parts of your home and then start the construction?
Did they come across like "yes men" just saying yes to anything you asked?				If they are just telling you yes to anything you ask, they are probably just trying to get you to move forward with them.
Did they provide candid advice without trying to sell you?				If they provide candid advice, it means they care about your well-being and not just themselves or their company. Remodeling is different than most services or products where you can see what you are buying. So you don't know how it will turn out until the end. Candor is very important especially in the beginning.
QUESTIONS TO ASK REMODELER:				
What does your remodel process look like?				If they can't articulate their process, then they don't have one and that leads to a disaster for homeowners.
When asked about their remodeling process, were they concise or did they fumble through it?				If they fumble through their process there's a chance they aren't confident about it. Most remodel contractors don't have much of a process so asking them about it in detail, such as what happens next? Can show you a lot about if they are organized and have a clear process they follow each time.
Do you use BuilderTrend or similar construction specific Project Management Software?				If they don't use project management software specific to remodeling such as BuilderTrend, BuildTools or CoConstruct you want to run away as fast as you can. That software is vital to keep the project on track, keep constant communication and pricing software to ensure the remodeler doesn't have to ask you for more money after the project has started. This is one of the most important questions you can ask someone because this software runs the majority of the project for both the homeowner and the contractors.
Do you use BuildClean or similar large air filters to reduce dust and harmful contaminants?				Remodeling dust can contain lead, silica mold spores and insect dander that you don't want contaminating your home. These dust particles settle on curtains, furniture, your air ducts, and many other places. This can be a health risk to a homeowner and their family. Another reason to ask them about air Filters is to see if they care about their employees health. They don't care about their employees health that tells you quite a bit about them. Another factor to consider is if they don't care about their employees health, there's a good chance that they don't have workers compensation on the employee. They may also not have the proper liability insurance. Workers compensation is expensive for construction employees because of the risk. Now that risk is passed on to you as a homeowner if they get hurt and they don't have the proper insurance. Also if they're not willing to invest in something as important as the air filters for both the homeowner and their employees, what other things are they cutting corners on?
Do you have a written agreement we both sign?				By Arizona law, home improvement projects over \$1000 require an agreement. You want to work with a company that spells everything out. A contract is there to protect you and the contractor.
Who will be my point of contact?				You should get a dedicated Project Manager. If not, you'll probably have to communicate with a person who handles too many things like, finances, customer questions, coordinating employees, coordinating trade partners, marketing, calling new prospective clients, etc. You don't want to compete for their attention!

<p>Do you require us to have all the materials chosen before we start?</p>				<p>If they do not, this is a huge red flag because it means the project will get pushed out and you'll have construction workers in your house longer. (Example: They don't require you to pick your sink and when the countertop fabricator comes out, if they don't know the sink dimension, they can't fabricate the countertops. That's one of many examples that can push your project back weeks and even months).</p>
<p>PROPOSAL PHASE</p>				
<p>Did they get you the remodel proposal in the amount of time they promised?</p>				<p>This goes back to the "Do what you say you will do". If they are off from what they told you by a day or two that's not terrible, but if it's later than that, it could be a red flag. If they can't get the proposal to you on time, what's your project timeline going to look like?</p>
<p>Did they include all of the project items they are going to complete?</p>				<p>In-homes are done pretty quickly, especially for what is involved. Missing something can happen, but you want to ensure that any part of the project scope you discussed is in writing.</p>
<p>Did they provide a section showing your selection items and how much of an allowance you get for each item you need to pick?</p>				<p>It is vital that they provide all of the selection items you need to pick and the allowance amount for each. Otherwise you may have to pay for those yourself which usually adds several thousand dollars to the average room remodel. You also want to ensure that the allowances they provided match your tastes for those selection items. Easter Egg: If you read this please let us know and we will give you a \$100 credit towards your electrical or plumbing fixture if we move forward on your project :)</p>
<p>Did they provide references at the time of providing a proposal to you?</p>				<p>Talk is cheap. A good remodeling company will be able to provide referrals from past clients to backup their claims. If they don't proactively provide you references, that is a red flag. They should want you to contact their former clients.</p>
<p>Did you call at least 2 of their references?</p>				<p>Some people are hesitant to call references but it is vital. Our Checklist on how to avoid a bad contractor has a list of questions to ask references: https://phxhomeremodeling.com/how-to-avoid-choosing-the-wrong-contractor/ These questions also help see if they are real references and not just their friends or family members.</p>
<p>Do they provide a remodel guarantee to ensure they cover a set amount if a surprise comes up?</p>				<p>Very few companies offer a guarantee where they put their money where their mouth is. If you would like to learn about our guarantee, visit our homepage: PhxHomeRemodeling.com</p>
<p>NOTES:</p>				