

How to Select a Siding (or other) Contractor

1. Contact Information

Ask for the number to call the contractor back as well as the best time to contact them. Ask for their business license number. Once you have these, you can check their record with the Better Business Bureau. This gives valuable input on the track record of the contractor. Find out how long the contractor has been in business, how many people they employ, and how many times per year they perform the work you are asking for. This helps you get a general feel for how experienced they are at their jobs.

2. Contractor Licenses and Insurance

Any contractor you consider needs to have the proper licenses and insurance to protect you and your property. They need to at least have vehicle and liability insurance, as well as workers compensation insurance.

3. Is the Contractor Capable of completing Your Project?

While there are many important interview questions for siding contractors, one of the most important is whether they have the skills to handle your project. Make sure they have completed projects like yours before. Make sure they have the proper equipment and manpower to handle the size of your project. Hiring a contractor that is too large or too small can be costly in time and money.

4. Ask for Photos and References

Ask to view pictures of their past work. Ask for the names and contact information for previous clients with projects like yours. Call those clients to see how easy the contractor is to work with and how satisfied they are with the final work. Did the final price match up with the estimate? Were there unexpected overcharges?

5. Who Does Most of The Work?

It is important to know who exactly will be doing the work. Will there be any subcontractors working on your project? What are their qualifications and experience? If the contractor will not personally oversee the project, how exactly the project will be managed? This could prevent you from being surprised by who is *actually* working on your project.

6. Time, Time, and More Time

Make sure your time schedule and the contractor's match. Ask if the contractor will stay on the project full time, and how long they estimate the project will take. Ask what will happen if the project runs past the scheduled completion date.

7. Ask How the Contractor Estimates Costs

Each contractor bases their estimates on different aspects. It is also important to know whether the estimate is a ballpark figure, or the real price to be finalized in a contract. To avoid possible increases in price, get the estimate set in the contract. This will prevent unreasonable price increases. Make sure you get all the details about the cost. Clearly define who is responsible for overage costs. Make sure that the contractor knows that any overages must be signed for by you before they can be authorized. Find out more on a vinyl siding cost estimate.

8. Price and Payment Schedule

How much is due when signing the contract and how other payments will be handled throughout the project? Be wary of contractors who want the entire project cost up front. Normal contracts will require about 50% down payment on signing, to cover some initial costs.

9. Always Ask About Warranties

Ask if they offer a vinyl siding warranty with their services. If there is a problem with your siding in the warranty period, you need to know whom to contact. A good warranty is the sign of a good contractor, and of a quality manufacturing company.

While these questions will help you pick the best contractor, remember the golden rule of picking contractors: If you feel uncomfortable when interviewing a prospective contractor, do not work with them.