



## Steps to Finding the Right General Contractor

**Step 1 - Forget about a contractor, get a designer**

**Step 2 - Find 3 or more prospects**

Somebody in your world is remodeling or has remodeled lately

Ask friends, family, co-workers, sub-contractors, neighborhood projects, realtors, Home Advisor, Angie's List, Houzz, NextDoor

**Step 3 - Check legals - Licensed and Bonded**

**Step 4 - Meet and Greet** - initial job interview

Subjectives - Are they on time? Appearance? Communication skills? Is this person not only a good tradesperson but also a good business person.

Review designs - a time to listen and be listened to

Critical questions:

How big is your crew?

Liability Insurance?

Do you employ subcontractors or your own in-house people?

How personally hands-on will you be with our project?

How often will you be on site?

How often will you be communicating with us?

Will you be itemizing your estimate?

What is your fee or percentage?

In addition to your stated fee do your subcontractors give you kickbacks?

Do you mark up materials?

Can we use your discount to purchase materials directly from suppliers?

How will the jobsite be left at the end of every day?

Will you have issues taking direction from our designer?

What level of residential craftsmanship are you most accustomed too?

How do you handle change orders?

**Step 5 - Ask for a "gut estimate" insuring it will neither win nor lose them the job**

If the average of all gut estimates is above your budget - return to the design.

If within budget - proceed to Step 6 (and proceed with other project costs: ie, engineering)

**Step 6 - Check references, especially most RECENT references**

ask to see the work yourself

**Step 7 - When plans are complete, request formal estimates from your short list**