

HAMPTON VA

HAMPTON POLICE DIVISION

This Checklist is provided to further assist the home owner:

TYPE OF CONTRACTOR

- Home building**- You will probably need a full time general contractor to build a house, as they will have the appropriate contacts and relationships with subcontractors - electricians, plumbers, etc.
- Renovations**- A small time contractor who will pitch in himself is a good choice - smaller jobs can be more cost effective if the foreman is also working.
- Landscaping**- A contractor who specializes in landscaping is your best bet as they will have the right contacts - nurseries, greenhouses, etc.
- Light remodeling**- Look for a specialist in the area you are remodeling - some contractors specialize in kitchens and baths, for example.

REFERENCES

- Recommendations**- Ask for the names and numbers of past clients you can check with who will vouch for quality of work done, budget adherence, and professionalism.
- Personal references**- Ask for names and numbers of people who will vouch for personal integrity.
- Legal**- Check to see if the contractor has any lawsuits pending.
- Online**- Google the contractor in search of any information - good or bad.
- BBB Check**- with the Better Business Bureau to see if any complaints have been filed.

INTERVIEWING

- Company history**- How long has the contractor been in business? It's best to select a contractor who has been in business at least 5 years.
- Goals**- Ask the contractor to explain clearly the solution he suggests to reach your goals.
- Quality standards**- Ask what guidelines the contractor uses to determine his quality standards.
- Professional designation**- Ask if the contractor has a specialty designation in any category of home improvement/remodeling.
- Trade membership**- A contractor who is the member of a trade association is more likely to be up to date on current materials, codes and methods.

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- Price- Ask the contractor for a final bid in writing that includes a detailed account of how budgeted funds will be allocated.

REQUIREMENTS

- Insurance- Your contractor should carry workman's compensation for anyone injured on your property. They should also carry general liability insurance in case they damage your property.
- Licensing- If you live in a region where licensing is required, make sure your contractor is properly certified and up to date.
- Permits- The contractor should demonstrate capability to acquire all the required permits as applicable by local law.

CONTRACT

- Start/end dates- There should be a clear timeline for job completion.
- Payment- You can expect to pay a deposit upfront and to supply payments at milestones, but the final payment should not be released until the job is completed to your satisfaction.
- Warranty- This should be spelled out in the contract with all parties under obligation clearly identified.
- Dispute resolution- Especially if the job is large, a mediation process should be agreed upon in case of conflict.
- Clean up- Unless you want to be left with a mess, make clean-up by the contractor one of the stipulations for release of final payment.
- Penalties- Write a per day penalty into the contract that will deduct from the price of the job if the contractor does not finish in the time frame agreed upon.
- Bonus- Likewise, a bonus can be offered for completion of the job earlier than planned - but make sure your contractor doesn't cut corners to finish early.