**Select a Remodeler**

Choosing a Remodeler - Remodeling projects can add to the value of your home and property.  competent remodeling is done by well-qualified professionals of good standing in your area.  Taking the time to choose your contractor wisely is the key to any successful home improvement venture.  
  
Find A Professional Remodeler Who’s Right For You

Tips and Techniques for Homeowners  
  
If you own a home, no matter what’s its age, sooner or later you may join the millions of people who remodel their homes each year. The reasons for remodeling are as varied as the projects themselves, but generally we  choose to remodel to add comfort, convenience, space and, ultimately, value to our homes.

If you are like many other home owners across the country who have undertaken a remodeling project, you had to make many decisions related to the project. Details like what kind of project you want to do, how you will use this space and how much money you are willing to spend must be thought-out and communicated to your contractor to avoid any confusion down the road.  So how did you go about finding a remodeler to do your project?  
  
Finding a remodeler who is right for you will take some time and planning, but it is worth the effort when you are satisfied with the completed project.   
  
To begin your search:  
•    Seek referrals from friends, family, neighbors and coworkers who have had remodeling work done and ask them if they would hire the remodeler again.    
  
•    Contact local trade associations such as your area’s local home builders association for a list of their members.    
  
•    Check with your state’s licensing agency and local building inspectors to verify the remodeler has the appropriate license(s).  
  
•    When you begin to interview a remodeler, keep in mind that you are buying a service rather than a product.  The quality of service the remodeler provides will determine the quality of the finished project and your satisfaction with it. Take a look at the remodeler’s business and management experience.  
  
•    Does the remodeler have a trustworthy reputation in the community, with previous customers and with local building supply companies?   
  
•    Does the remodeler carry insurance that protects you from claims arising from property damage or jobsite injuries?    
  
•    In addition to business and management experience, look at the remodeler’s construction and technical expertise, customer service and communication skills.  
  
•    Does the remodeler have a working knowledge of the many types of homes in your area?   
  
•    Does the remodeler offer an array of options for your project thus demonstrating a knowledge of and experience with a variety of products, materials and techniques?   
  
•    Does the remodeler listen to you and understand your needs and wants with the project?  
  
•    Will the remodeler provide you with scheduled updates so that you can make appropriate decisions and prepare for any inconveniences?  
  
Finding a remodeler who is right for you is not as simple as picking up the yellow pages of your phone book. It takes time to interview and select a contractor who will best suit your needs and the needs of your project.

|  |
| --- |
| Are you considering hiring a contractor?   Here are four crucial pieces of information that you should look for when hiring a contractor to work on your home. |

**License**  
Ask to see a copy of the contractor's license.  If you are having more than $600 of work done on your home in any of the following categories, then your contractor must have either a Residential Builder License or a Maintenance & Alterations license from the State of Michigan.  Contractors doing work in the following categories without a license are committing a misdemeanor.

* carpentry
* concrete
* excavation
* insulation work
* masonry
* painting and decorating
* siding
* roofing
* screens and storm sash
* gutters
* tile & marble
* house wrecking
* swimming pools
* basement waterproofing

**Insurance**  
Ask to see a copy of the contractor's business and liability insurance.  If your contractor is not insured, then you may be liable for any injury or property damage that happens as a result of your project.    
  
**References**  
Ask for at least three references of past customers for whom the contractor has done work.  Make sure that you can call these people and interview them about the work the contractor did on their home.

**SWMHBA Member**

Ask if the contractor is a member of the Southwestern Michigan Home Builders Association (SWMHBA).