

# Selecting a Home Improvement Contractor

for link and support information, go to: [www.SayImprove.com](http://www.SayImprove.com)

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## Start with a Pre-Screening Search

- first and foremost, begin your search using the ServiceMagic pre-screened network of home remodeling contractors and service professionals
  - ServiceMagic maintains a rating system submitted by previous customers on various contractors and service professionals
  - ServiceMagic will also guarantee the service. That is the assurance you need to make sure the project is done correctly: [www.SayImprove.com/contractor](http://www.SayImprove.com/contractor)
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## Make Sure the Contractor has NARI Membership

- the National Association of the Remodeling Industry (NARI) represents remodeling contractors, product manufacturers, and other industry specialists
- the association is committed to enhancing the professionalism of the remodeling industry and serving as an ally to the homeowner
- NARI members must abide by the NARI code of ethics: [view code of ethics](#)
- NARI certification includes exams and certification classes: [view certification steps](#)
- contact the NARI chapter within your area for information about a potential contractor: [view NARI chapter directory](#)

more information about the NARI: [visit NARI.org](http://visit NARI.org)

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## Investigate Their Established Business

- check the contractor's place of business, phone number, and other industry associations — make sure they are valid establishments
  - make sure the contractor is fully licensed with local and state governments, if required
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## Investigate Their Established Business

- check with your local jurisdiction to ensure the license is valid and up-to-date — do not base the contractor's license with a business card or verbal commitment
- lookup state, county and city governments for information on the contractor's license: <http://www.statelocalgov.net>
- make sure the contractor is fully insured and carries worker's compensation, liability insurance and property damage insurance — ask to review the documentation
- check with your local Better Business Bureaus, building associations, and other consumer protection agencies: view the Better Business Bureau
- ensure that there is no outstanding complaints, fines, or penalties issued against the contractor — if so, make sure the contractor provides a valid explanation
- you can view more information about selecting your contractor: from the national association of the remodeling industry: [NARI.org](http://NARI.org)



## Interview the Contractor

- meet with the contractor face-to-face — be prepared to show drawings, specifications, and clippings from illustrations and products  
  
see project specifications plan: [www.SayImprove.com/spec-plan.html](http://www.SayImprove.com/spec-plan.html)
- be detail in your specs — this increases the likelihood that the contractor is the right person for the job
- be prepared to ask questions about the contractor and your project — note that you are looking for the person with best all-around service and qualification
- sample question include:

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- business establishment
  - time frame
  - operation policy
  - certifications and permits
  - insurance
  - crew and use of subcontractors
  - review of sample projects
  - other
- the NARI has a complete list of interview questions: [view interview questions](#)  
NARI also provides a summary of "warning signs" during interviews: [NARI.org](http://NARI.org)



## Check References

- request for a list of references from previous clients — contact these references to inquire on the builders work habits, completion schedule, clean up, and any other related issues or problems that the previous client may have experienced

sample questions to ask —

**question:**

did the remodeling contractor complete the project within your satisfaction?

**question:**

was the project completed on time?

**question:**

did the contractor fulfill his or her part of the contract?

**question:**

was the contractor easy to communicate with?

**question:**

did the contractor and his crew showed up on time?

**question:**

were you satisfied with the subcontractors that your contractor used?

**question:**

would you use this contractor again without hesitation?