

How to Choose a General Contractor for Your Home Remodel

Choose and hire the *right* general contractor with this checklist, including tips and questions you can ask your local general contractor.

1. The general contractor must be licensed and insured.

Since your renovation, home addition, remodel, or new build is an important investment, it's important to know that your general contractor is licensed to work in your area with up-to-date insurance. This will ensure that they're qualified and experienced—and that you're covered in case of accidents or damage during the project.



Questions you can ask:

- ☐ *Have you passed the F13 exam?*
- ☐ *Do you have general liability insurance, commercial auto, and workers comp?*



2. The general contractor must be familiar with the local building permitting department & code requirements.

Every building department has slightly different processes with different classifications. Every building department adopts its own revisions to building code and which year of the building code to enforce. Every building department has different permit requirements with varying plan review timelines. Your general contractor must be familiar with all these variables to schedule your project successfully.

Questions you can ask:

- *How many permits have you pulled in this jurisdiction in the past year?*
- *What year of codes is this jurisdiction enforcing?*



3. The general contractor should have a dedicated project manager devoted to good communication and project management.

You are not only hiring a general contractor for vendors and subcontractors; you need a professional site superintendent or project manager that will listen to you and advocate for you on any issues/changes. They will be able to foresee any potential problems and address them well before they happen. The project manager should also



keep you informed on the day-to-day work on your home and ensure that you are always satisfied.

Questions you can ask:

- *Who is going to run/be responsible for my project?*
- *How will they keep me informed throughout the project?*
- *How often can I expect to hear from them?*



4. The general contractor must have good relationships with high-quality vendors.

When the general contractor has an established, positive, and even longstanding relationship with trustworthy vendors, the selections process is much easier for you. This way, you won't run into any surprises when choosing your cabinets, countertops, tile, flooring, and all the other details that make up your remodel. Besides, a general contractor that the vendor is familiar with gets better pricing than retail pricing—often saving you enough to cover the general contractor fee. And too, when the general contractor and vendor are familiar with each other, you won't run into the excuse of waiting on vendors.

Questions you can ask:

- *Who do you use as your cabinet supplier? When can we schedule a showroom visit?*
- *Where can I look at countertop slabs?*



- *Do you have a preferred flooring or tile vendor?*
- *Do you have a good relationship with your lumber yard?*

5. The general contractor should have experience with projects like yours.

With experience comes clarity on next steps forward. An experienced general contractor will have a tried and true process to follow to ensure that your project is successful. Ask about their portfolio of past projects. You'll be able to see how their process works and evidence of their attention to detail, professionalism, and experience.

Questions you can ask:

- *Do you have a portfolio of projects you've completed?*
- *What are the next steps for a job like this?*
- *What is the timeline associated with these steps?*

6. The general contractor must be transparent about budgeting and pricing structure.

Note this well: A good contractor has a set system for pricing out their projects. They should want to involve the client as much as possible on the pricing and be as transparent as possible on pricing and budget before and throughout the project. (You can learn about our pricing structure under the FAQs at [https://pr.builders/renovation/.](https://pr.builders/renovation/))

Questions you can ask:

- *How do you price out your services?*
- *Do you price some jobs differently than others?*
- *Is it a hassle if I want to change my scope of work later into the project?*

