

Dealing with Contractors

1. Where to find them
 - Service guide in newspaper
 - Service section of weekly papers
 - Referrals
 - Supplier referrals
 - Craigslist (GIGS)
 - Realtors
 - Homeadvisors.com
 - AngiesList.com
2. Property should be under contract and you have a home inspection before involving a contractor.
3. Talk to previous clients and visit previous jobs.
4. If you're in doubt get two estimates. Make sure the estimates are from contractors ready to do the work if asked, not a contractor who simply prepares estimates.
5. Make sure you take your checklist when visiting the house with the contractor to prepare estimate. It's up to you to decide what's done. Add on's after the job is started can get expensive. Take time to check everything visible.
6. Turn on all utilities and check systems before actually hiring a contractor. This is not mandatory when getting estimates before purchasing, but should be done if you want a true repair figure.
7. Never give a contractor more than 25% upfront and not even that if you can lower it. This is especially true the first time you use them.
8. Never give a second draw until enough work has been completed to cover the first and second draw.
9. Never, never, never, give a contractor the final draw until the work is 100% complete and inspected by you or your agent. All debris removed from premises before final draw and lien releases and city inspections completed and lien releases and city inspections completed.

Violate This Rule and I Can Guarantee You're Going To A Seminar

10. Don't be a know-it-all. Ask for the contractors input on how to best do the job for the least amount.
11. Contract must contain a deadline, draw schedule, late penalty.
12. Bids must be detailed with labor and materials separate.
13. A good time frame for repairs is a week for every \$10,000 in repairs.