

HOW-TO CHOOSE A PAINTING CONTRACTOR

Nothing transforms a room or house with a quick, fresh look like paint. The color of paint in a room can make the difference between just being in a room and feeling good in a room. Professional painters can aid in your home improvement transformations.

There are many important things to consider when choosing a painting contractor. You should make certain the contractor you select has a valid license to do business. When you hire a non-licensed painting contractor, your liability may be at stake.

For your protection, you'll want to make sure that the contractor has up-to-date general liability and workman's compensation insurance. Otherwise, you might be responsible if there's an accident or injury. You can request a free certificate of insurance directly from the contractor's insurance company. Be sure that your name and address are on the certificate. Make sure the insurance amount is adequate to protect you should an accident occur while the painters are on your property.

A few questions to consider when selecting a painting contractor are:

- When you called the contractor, did you get a company representative? If you

reached an answering machine, you may have difficulty getting your questions answered or problems resolved. A personal response to your call assures you prompt attention to your needs now and probably in the future.

- Who are the contractor's references? Follow up on references supplied by the painter. References will help you determine whether the contractor is able to do your job adequately. Ask the contractor for photographs showing samples of his work.

- Will you need to pay for the job prior to substantial completion? When a contractor requests significant payment before the project is finished, it may be a sign of insufficient credit or under capitalization. These issues could result in problems for you.

- What kind of paints and tools are going to be used? The use of quality products can affect the outcome of the project just as much as the painters. Most experienced painters will have invested in professional grade power painting equipment.

- Does the contractor extend a warranty on the material and workmanship? When the contractor offers a warranty, it's a sign that they believe in their work and will

be around to back it up over time.

One of the most important steps in selecting a painting contractor is obtaining an estimate. Prior to calling for an estimate, inspect the area and remove hazards that could hinder your job or cost you more money. You should not be charged for an estimate. You will want to make certain that you have a written estimate that clearly defines the scope of the work that will be performed. A vague, unprofessional estimate may indicate a poor job. Be certain that all of your questions have been answered before signing the contract.

When talking to a contractor, be very specific about the work you want to have done. Discuss the areas you want to have painted, the brand name and type of paint (such as latex or oil), the number of coats that will be applied, and the type of preparation work. This information should be included in the written estimate.

SELECTING A COLOR

WHITE – Painting a room white (or a variation, such as off-white, eggshell, or beige) makes a room look bigger and brighter. White is especially popular in kitchens

and bathrooms.

GREEN – Green is reminiscent to rejuvenating garden atmospheres. Green is suitable for any part of a home.

BLUE – Painting a room blue is a good way to soften extremely bright areas. Blue is said to encourage peacefulness and harmony. Blue is especially popular in bedrooms.

YELLOW – Pale yellows may help make smaller rooms feel bigger. Yellow is seen as a cherry, sunny color. Yellow works well in kitchens.

RED – Select red paint carefully. Red rooms can be bright and bold, but they can also be over dramatic and promote aggressiveness. Maroon shades are sometimes selected in living room areas.

ORANGE – Orange, a combination of red and yellow affects lively and warm rooms. Dens and living rooms are sometimes painted orange.