

CHOOSING A BUILDER?!

Use this checklist to help you select a home builder or home remodeler to work on or build your home.

- [Contact your local home builders' association](#) for the names of member builders and remodelers. You can also ask family, friends or coworkers for recommendations.
- Make sure the builder or home remodeler has a permanent business location and a good reputation with local banks and suppliers.
- Find out how long they have been in the building business. It usually takes three to five years to establish a financially sound business. You want to make sure they will be around after the construction is complete to service any warranties.
- Check out the company's rating and if there have been any complaints filed with your local Better Business Bureau: bbb.org.
- Make sure the builder/remodeler has sufficient workers compensation and general liability insurance. If not, you may be liable for any construction-related accidents on your premises.
- Ask the builder/remodeler to provide you with names of previous customers. If they won't, beware. If they do, ask the customers if they would hire the builder/remodeler again.
- Ask if you can see the builder/remodelers work, both completed and in progress. Check for quality of workmanship and materials.
- Do you feel you can easily communicate with the builder/remodeler? Remember you will be in close contact with them throughout the construction process and afterward as you live in your new home.
- Make sure the builder/remodeler provides you with a complete and clearly written contract. The contract will benefit both of you. If you are having a new home built, get and review a copy of the home warranty and homeowner manual as well.
- Be cautious of unusually low-priced bids. If the builder/remodeler is unable to pay for the materials and labor as the project proceeds, this may indicate a potential problem. Keep in mind that less expensive does not necessarily mean better!
- Verify that your remodeler is an EPA Lead-Safe Certified Renovator if you are planning work in a pre-1978 home that will disturb more than six square feet of painted surfaces inside the home or 20 square feet on the exterior of the home. Learn more about the [EPA's lead paint rule](#).

