

## Contractor Comparison Checklist



Selecting the right contractor for your project is the most important decision you'll have to make.  
 Selecting the right company for your project can save you time, headaches, and possibly a lot of money.

Here is a guide to ensure you ask the right questions:

Questions to ask:	All Decked Out	Other	Other
Does the contractor have the proper insurance and worker compensation insurance for employees and if subcontractors are utilized are they also properly insured?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Does the company offer a written workmanship warranty that you can review prior to accepting the project scope?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Are the installers certified in the projects they install? Just because a company is certified does not mean all of their installers are certified.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Does the builder have an actual shop/office they run their business out of?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Does the company have a good social media presence showcasing their own work and engagement with the community along with being well reviewed? -Verify images and companies that use stock photos or stolen photos may not run an ethical business.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Can you find the company in online searches? Google, Yelp etc. Look for companies who have a physical address vs a P.O box.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Does the company use their own photos for marketing? Beware of the companies that use stock photos from the manufactures.  Beware: We have had a couple employees who worked for us for only a short period but they couldn't keep up with our level of quality and expectations so they branched off and started their own business. On their website they are using photos of our projects claiming it was their work. They may have worked on a small part of the project but was designed by All Decked Out, managed by us and inspected by our skilled team. Being an ethical business is very important.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Does the contractor provide a layout sketch and a very detailed proposal of the work they will be doing? If it's not in writing, don't assume it's included. Very basic or lacking details can make for a frustrating process or surprise charges. Ask what grade of lumber and where they source materials from. I guarantee they do not use Kiln dried lumber for best practices.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Does the company have a written policy for Change Orders and upfront transparent costs?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Are the building departments familiar with the company? (Calling your local building department might not be a bad idea)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Does the company have an account and in good standing with the lumber yards? If companies want you to purchase materials, that should be a major red flag. Real businesses provide materials and labor for your project. Those who can't afford it or have bad credit standing have you purchase the material. They will say they are saving you money. Just beware.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Are the installers recruited by the company to acquire top talent and has the installers doing the work been with the company for a while? Always a great idea to ask how long the assigned installer has been working for the company. Everyone is new at some point, so if it's a new installer will the project be managed and supervised more closely? When we have newer teams we let our clients know, and are very involved until we are comfortable after working closely with them for several projects first.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Is the company booked out for at least 3-6 months? Be very careful if companies are available to do the work right away. They may say we have an opening but most companies that do good work are	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

booked out well in advance.			
Does the company have a communication client portal system for when the project starts? Communication is vital for any project. We use a top of the line software to keep our projects organized.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Does the company have a project manager that will oversee the project and check for quality and keep up with communication? Our project manager typically is on site a 2-3 times per project at a minimum to check the work of the crews and checks BuilderTrend daily. We do a much more detailed inspection than the building departments. The building departments are to check for code and to ensure plans are followed. Our clients do not build decks every day but our team is trained and knows what to look for to ensure our SOP's are followed.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Does the contractor/company have a procedure in place for you to review different materials for your project? Understanding the pros and cons of the different products will be very beneficial. We have an outdoor showroom and an indoor office.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Does the contractor respond to messages, answer the phone or get back to you within a reasonable amount of time?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Do they have someone who actually answers the phone?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Did they get you a detailed written proposal?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Discuss borders and the importance of the decking overhanging the fascia. Discuss stair builds and how many stair stringers will be used. For a 4' wide set of steps 6-7 stair stringers should be used. Not getting the very small details right in a deck build can be a waste of your large investment.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
What do they do with flat blocking for items such as railing install? We use flashing tape on tops of our beams, flat blocking and any double rim joists.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

