

# How to Find a Great Handyman

Even the handiest of homeowners find that they need to have a professional handyman (or “small job professional”) that they can call when things need to be fixed or done around the home and are out of their scope of experience or know-how. The trick is finding a great one that will be available when you need them, and that has the knowledge and experience to get the job done right the first time.

## The Benefits

- Can take away the anxiety over the “what if” should anything go wrong in your home.
- By hiring a professional, you can rest assured that any job will be done right the first time, and that you won’t have to deal with the same issue in your home for a very long time.
- The ability to hire someone who specializes in their field (e.g. plumbers, electricians, landscapers, etc.)
- You will be provided with a guarantee or warranty of work that will give you additional peace of mind when work needs to be done.

## The Questions

- How long have you been in business?
- Do you have local registration, licenses, and the insurance required to work as a handyman in this area?
- Do you have any employees that will be working with you in and/or around my home?
- If so, do you perform background checks on these employees?
- What qualifications do you require any of your employees to have?
- Do you have any references?
- Do you have an area of expertise or specialize in any field?
- Will you be able to perform the tasks I need done around my home? Do you experience performing these jobs?
- Are there any jobs that you feel you wouldn’t be able to do?
- How do you charge for your services? Is it by the ½ hour or the hour?
- Is there a minimum rate that you charge?
- Do you provide free estimates?
- Do you place a markup on your materials, or will I be charged what you’re charged for them?
- Is there any guarantee with estimates? What happens if the job costs more at completion than the estimate indicated?

## The Checklist

- Walk around your home and make an organized list of what needs to be done. List these in order of priority so that the things you most need get done first.
- Search online and in your local Yellow Pages for handymen in your area. You can also ask for referrals from friends or family members that have hired a handyman for their home.
- Create a separate list of the top 3 – 5 handymen that you've found.
- Interview each of these candidates. During the interview ask them about their expertise, pricing, guarantees of work, and if they possess the licenses and registration required to operate their business. Also ask each of them for references.
- Research these top candidates. Search online testimonials and references and inquire at the Better Business Bureau to ensure they don't have any complaints against them. Also take note of any positive remarks you find about these handymen during your search.
- Make your choice from these top candidates. Base your choice on their skills, price, and your personal feeling towards them.
- Hire the person you like the best!
- Perform another walk-through of your home, this time with the handyman in tow. Be clear about the things you need done, and ask lots of questions about whether or not they can do it, how long it will take, and what the estimated cost will be.
- Ask for a detailed contract to be drawn up detailing exactly what will be done, the timeframe it will take, and the price and warranties/guarantees. Make sure both you and the handyman sign this contract before any work begins.
- Perform another walk-through of your home. This time, on your own and organizing materials that will be needed. During this walk-through, tarp furniture and personal belongings that you don't want damaged during the process, and clear any work spaces that will be required for large projects.
- Be as of much assistance as you can while the handyman is there performing the work but also try to give them space so that they can complete the job as quickly as possible.
- Once the work is completed, review it with the handyman there and ask questions about how to care for the area after the job, what was done, and potential problems that are still present or that might come up in the future.
- If there is a problem with the work now or in the future, give the handyman a chance to fix the problem. If they don't, then lodge a complaint with the Better Business Bureau or other sources in your area that you know of.
- If you're happy with the work the handyman did, let them know! The best way to do this is to recommend them to family and friends.