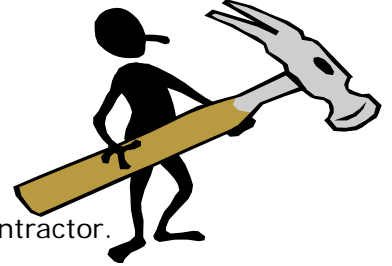




Hiring a Home Improvement Contractor? Make Sure to Follow the Four Steps...



Step 1: Select a Home Improvement Contractor

- Ask family, friends, neighbors, and co-workers to recommend a contractor.
- Contact local trade organization such as the Tri-County National Association of the Remodeling Industry (330) 920-1379 or Home Builders Association of Portage & Summit Counties at (330) 869-6800.
- To find out if other consumers have filed complaints against a contractor, call the Ohio Attorney General's Office at (800) 282-0515, visit the Better Business Bureau's website at www.bbb.org or contact our office.

Step 2: Get Estimates for the Work

- Get three (3) written estimates from contractors.
- The estimates should have a complete description of the work to be done, materials to be used, start and completion date, and costs.

Step 3: Before You Sign the Contract

- Contractor's name, address, and telephone number should be on the contract.
- A detailed list of all materials including color, model, size, brand name, and product.
- What the contractor will and will not do with costs.
- A provision requiring written approval for any changes.
- Any oral statements or promises added to the contract must be in writing.
- Agree to start and completion dates.
- When you are solicited at your home, the contract is to include a 3-day cancellation notice and the procedures you are to follow should you decide to cancel with them.
- Make a minimal down payment; consider paying with credit card because if you experience a problem you can dispute the payment with your credit card company.

Step 4: Before You Make the Final Payment

- Get copies of your written warranties for materials and workmanship.
- Proof that all subcontractors and suppliers for the job have been paid.
- All work agreed upon has been completed.
- The job site has been cleaned up of excess materials, tools, and equipment.