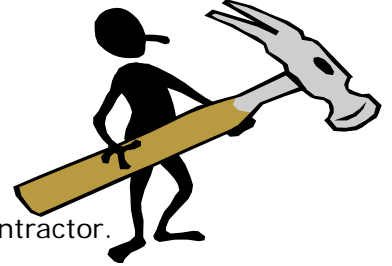




## Hiring a Home Improvement Contractor? Make Sure to Follow the Four Steps...



### **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](http://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.

# What to Look For in a Home Improvement Contract

XYZ Home Improvements  
 123 Main Street  
 City, State Zip Code  
 Telephone  
 Cell/Fax

Protect yourself by getting **all verbal promises in writing.**

Make sure the contractor's physical **address** (not just PO Box) is included, as well as **telephone**, fax and cell phone numbers.

Homeowners Names	Telephone Number
Street Address	Job Location Address (if different from home address)

XYZ Home Improvements proposes to furnish the materials and perform the labor necessary for the completion of:

List any **subcontractors** that may be used, including their names, addresses and telephone numbers.

Insert **description of the work** to be done, list of materials, who is paying for materials, who is responsible to obtain permits, warranty information, if any, and all costs.

Make sure the contract **includes start and end dates** of work to be done.

All material is guaranteed to be as listed and the above work is to be done in a workmanlike manner for the sum of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

If you want to add or delete something in the contract, do it **before** you sign.

Make sure to list any deposits and when the final **payment** is due. If partial payments are to be made, list the requirements for those payments.

## Acceptance of Proposal

The above work, costs, materials and details are hereby accepted. Payments will be made as listed above.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Contractor                      Date  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Homeowner                      Date

Be sure that all parties **sign and date** the contract and that you get a copy when you sign it.

## Customer's Right to Cancel

You, the buyer, may cancel this transaction at any time prior to midnight of the third business day after the date of this transaction. See the attached notice of cancellation for an explanation of this right.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Homeowner                      Date

Ohio cancellation law gives you **3-days to cancel sales made in your home** or at a place that is not a company's regular place of business. Your contractor must provide you with duplicate copies of the cancellation notice, which includes how to cancel your agreement.