



Shopping for a contractor

Home remodeling is an investment. Organize your home improvement project and budget with these tips:

Find your contractor

1. Get two or three recommendations for local contractors. Ask each contractor bidding on your remodel for references from their most recent clients.
2. Check each contractor's license with the Contractors State License Board (CSLB) at <http://www.cslb.ca.gov>.
3. Ask each contractor questions, including:
 - How many similar projects have you completed in the last year?
 - How many other projects are you currently working on?
 - Do you use subcontractors on your jobs?
4. Before employing a contractor, contact your local building department to confirm the required building permits and whether you need what the contractor says you need.

Making your deal

1. Check your contractor's insurance policies for coverage on all aspects of the construction, including workers' compensation.
2. Enter into a written contract and make sure it includes the three-day notice of cancellation mandated by law for home improvement, remodeling or repair projects.
3. Have the contractor include in the contract an itemization of costs for materials, labor and other expenses.
4. Get an invoice for any deposit you make. The maximum initial deposit amount is the lesser of:
 - 10% of the contract price; or
 - \$1,000. [See California Business and Professions Code §7159.5(a)(3)]
5. Don't make the final payment until you're completely satisfied with the job, and you confirm the building department has finished all required inspections.

Ready to upgrade to a new home? Call me today for more tips and a free home estimate.