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FINDING GOOD SUBCONTRACTORS

By: BUILDERADVISOR.COM

You find subcontractors much the same way that you would find a general contractor or any other professional such as a doctor, dentist, or accountant. Ask around, talk to friends and neighbors, see who is working in your neighborhood.

If you see work being done in your neighborhood, don't be shy. Introduce yourself, get a business card, take a look at the work if it is visible outside. If it's indoor work, knock on the door later and ask the owner how the job is going. Ask if you can take a look -usually they are proud to show off their new project.

If the work is a large job handled by a general contractor, you may need to do a little more digging to figure out who the subcontractors are. Often the company name and phone number are painted on the side of the truck. Other times, you'll have to walk up and ask who is doing the plumbing, electrical, roofing, tile, or whatever work it is you are in need of.

You can also ask at the local lumberyard - especially a contractor-oriented yard. However, I've had better luck with specialty suppliers. For example, if you're looking for a tile installer ask at a tile retailer. For a plumber or electrician, ask at the local supply house that wholesales to the trade.

Once you've found a couple of good subs, chances are they can introduce you to others. These folks work together regularly and know who does good work. Try to get at least two or three names for each trade so you can get competitive bids. Also not everyone will be available when you need them.

HIRING SUBCONTRACTORS

Hiring a subcontractor is really no different than hiring a general contractor, except that the scope of work is much more limited. However, the principles are the same:

- Start with a clear description of the scope of work, using drawn plans and written specifications, as needed.
- Solicit bids on an apples-to-apples basis.
- Make sure the subcontractor is properly licensed and insured.
- Use an appropriate contract that clearly defines the scope of work, price, and payment schedule. Make sure the contract covers important details such as the schedule, clean up, removal of debris, and a written warranty.

Deposits.

Be leery of a contractor or sub who wants a large down payment before starting the job. If materials need to be special-ordered, one option is for you to order the materials under your own name with the required deposit. That way, if the sub never shows up for one reason or another, you own the special-order materials and have not lost your deposit.



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Thanks You for Your Business!



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