

WHAT YOU MUST KNOW BEFORE HIRING A PRO

... and why a coupon shouldn't be the only criteria for choosing your paint contractor!

Certain painting jobs are too big, too complex or simply out of reach for the average homeowner. That's when it's time to call in a professional.

While it may be tempting to do an online search for local painters, redeem a handy coupon or contact the last company to stuff a sales flyer in your mailbox – hiring a good professional painter requires some forethought and due diligence. Don't reward your painting job to the first person to answer their phone. Seeking out a qualified, experienced and reputable contractor will save you migraines down the road.

It is important to find a professional painting firm that will deliver quality from start to finish. A happy, satisfied customer should be their ultimate goal and upholding their reputation and workmanship should be essential to them. Start by asking neighbors, family and friends to recommend local painters who have recently completed jobs for them. Would they hire the same company again?

Before making your decision, collect at least three quotes. A good contractor will visit your home before giving you a written cost estimate. This is a perfect time to learn more about their company by asking several pertinent questions:

- How long have you been in business? This is not the same as "How long have you been painting?" so ask both questions. You should hire someone who has been in operation for some time.

- Who will do the work? The company owner may do the project estimating, but not the job itself. Ask whether employees or subcontractors will be assigned to paint your home and how much experience they have. This also opens the door to verifying their safe practices, licenses and insurance coverage.
- What kind of preparation work will you do? Proper preparation is more than just providing drop cloths to protect floors and furniture. Will the contractor clean and prime the walls, remove switch plates and outlet covers, mask trim and mouldings with tape and otherwise prepare the area as necessary?
- What kind of paint do you use? Unless you work with an interior designer, choosing the wall color is up to you. However, find out what brand or brands of paint the contractor works with and if they have recommendations on other materials, colors or finishes that would work best.
- How much? You get what you pay for, which is why the lowest bid is never the only consideration in hiring a pro painter – just as the highest bid doesn't make that company the best contractor. Instead of hiring on price alone, look at the bigger picture to see the value of what is being offered.
- Can you provide references? Don't be shy about asking for multiple referrals – and they should be as recent as possible. Follow up by calling the names on the list and asking what it was like to work with the company: did they show up on time every morning and tidy well before leaving in the evening? How long did it take to complete the actual job compared to set expectations and did they charge the price quoted on the original bid? If there was a difference, ask why.

Ask HARRISON PAINT CO
which local house painting
pros they recommend

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