



10 Tips To Help Choose The Right Roofing Contractor

The biggest obstacle to a successful roofing project is choosing the right contractor. After a damaging storm, you need to quickly get your home back to normal and perform the necessary roofing repairs. But that doesn't mean you should just choose the first contractor who knocks on your door. Finding one that is trustworthy, honest, and professional may sound difficult—but we're here to help. Check out these 10 important tips to consider to help protect yourself, your home, and your wallet.

1. Get local referrals. There is less chance of potential issues or scams when you choose a contractor from your community. They are more familiar with local rules and code regulations and have a relationship with area crews and suppliers.

2. Look for manufacturer designations. Manufacturer designations are considered a badge of honor because the contractor must meet certain minimum requirements to be factory certified (although, some manufacturers have more stringent requirements than others). GAF strictly enforces their top designation by only allowing 2% of roofing contractors per market to be recognized as Master Elite® Contractors. (Unlike other manufacturer designations, Master Elite® Contractors cannot use this top designation in another territory, only in the location of the storm.) Find a Master Elite® Contractor near you here: <http://www.gaf.com/Roofing/Residential/Contractors/Search>

3. Research Better Business Bureau (BBB) ratings. Some contractors blow in (no pun intended) right after a storm looking for work, so it's important to look them up on the BBB website and make sure they have a good score. Stay away from contractors who do not exist on BBB.org. GAF Master Elite® Contractors are required to maintain satisfactory ratings with the BBB in order to retain their certification.

4. Get an extensive warranty. Not all contractors can offer warranties from the manufacturer that include coverage for the contractor's workmanship. If a contractor installs the roof incorrectly, it may take months or years for the damage to show up—and insurance won't pay for it. If the contractor won't fix it (or worse, has gone out of business), your only recourse is to pay for their mistake yourself. A Master Elite® Contractor can offer one of the longest workmanship warranties in the market—the Golden Pledge® Ltd. Warranty.

5. Be concerned about safety. A contractor without a training or safety program may not be the best person for your job. GAF sponsors a unique national training organization called the Center for the Advancement of Roofing Excellence (CARE), which has trained more than 200,000 professionals. GAF is the only roofing manufacturer with a dedicated team of trainers in the industry.

6. Check for proper license and insurance. The contractor should have insurance for all employees and subcontractors and be able to provide a copy of their insurance certificate for validation. Not having adequate insurance could potentially lead to litigation between a contractor and homeowner if the roofing employee has an injury at the home. Most states require licensing for contractors, but that does not stop unlicensed contractors from attempting to do the roofing work. In states where licenses are required, make sure your contractor provides you with a copy of their license and confirm their status online. GAF Master Elite® Contractors must hold appropriate levels of Workers Compensation, at least \$1 million worth of General Liability coverage, and have proper state and city licensing where they are performing the work.



7. Pay your deductible. Any contractor who claims they can handle the repair without having the homeowner pay their insurance deductible is committing insurance fraud and endangering the homeowner. The insurance deductible is the responsibility of the insured, and the contractor should reflect that in the quote without inflating the estimate to cover all or part of the deductible.

8. Handle your own claim. A contractor who says they are “a claim specialist” or can “handle your insurance claim” may be breaking the law. In most states, it is illegal for contractors to act on behalf of the homeowner when negotiating an insurance claim. Any contractor who opens the door to potential legal actions is not acting in your best interest.

9. Don't give in to pressure. Watch out for a contractor who pressures you to sign a contract before the insurance company has estimated the damage.

Some contractors say they can work with whatever your insurance company settles upon, however the homeowner needs to ensure it's not just any amount, but the *right* amount. The contractor should thoroughly examine the home and check that the insurance adjuster didn't miss any damages.

10. Know your material choices. A contractor who does not offer you different shingle options is not looking out for your best interest. The style and color of the shingle you install can affect the resale value of your home. If the insurance company is paying for a new roof, it may be the perfect time to make a change and upgrade to a more unique style that suits your taste. GAF contractors can offer extensive design and color choices for your home. Go to gaf.com and check out the choices now so you're ready. Knowledge is power.