



universal
Roof & Contracting

15 Questions to Ask Your Roofing Contractor



A roof isn't something you purchase every day. It's an investment — and an important one at that. When putting a roof over your head, you look for safety and sustainability. It's not the place to compromise cost over quality.

If shingles are damaged, disappearing or you're experiencing leaks, it's probably time to replace your roof. When hiring a roofing company, it's important to know the key factors of the project before you sign any contract.

Universal Roofing has put together a list of 15 questions to ask your roofing contractor. These key discussion points will ensure the company you hire is reputable, capable, and will get the job done right the first time.

1

What is the full name and address of your company?

Most dissatisfaction involves in low-bid, undercapitalized contractors. If the roofing contractor is permanently established, how confident are you that they'll complete the work to standard? Our team recommends visiting the contractor's place of business. Has it been there long? Does it appear they have the right resources, equipment, manpower and time to complete your project in a professional manner?

2

Are you licensed?

Most states require a roofer to be licensed. But, don't be fooled by just any contractor's license. Generally, the requirements are minimal and the law is poorly enforced. Check with local licensing offices to make sure the roofing contractor's license is up-to-date and doesn't involve any outstanding violations. Also, inquire about the contractor's commitment to the trade. Is the business a member of the trade association?

3

Do you have workman's compensation insurance?

Employers have to offer workman's compensation by law. Some contractors and roofers still manage to skimp out on the requirement, though. The problem with that is if someone gets injured on your property, you might be faulted for the medical bills. To protect yourself (and your wallet), make sure the roofing contractor you hire insures each worker.

4 Do you carry general liability insurance?

Workman's compensation covers employees while general liability insurance covers your property. In a worst case scenario were something to happen to your home during the project, and it would protect you alleviate your responsibility for covering the expenses. Don't simply take a roofing contractor's word for it, ask to see an insurance certificate.

5 How long has the contractor been in business?

Obviously, the more experience they have, the more your mind will be put at ease. Try to aim for five years or more. Anything less and you may be risking quality. Check the roofing contractor's references or review their work and performance.

6 What is the contractor's track record for handling complaints?

Complaints happen, no situation is perfect. Ask the roofing contractor for the name of a problem account and an explanation of the reconciliation. Countless projects are exposed to disputes. But, evaluating how the contractor handled it is a good way to assess their professionalism.

7 What type of warranty should I expect?

Typically, warranties last a year or more. It's important to keep in mind, though. The length of the warranty is less important than the ability of the roofing contractor to stand behind it. If the company upholds high standards, the product will perform well beyond the warranty.

8

What are the terms of payment?

The schedule, terms and method of payment should be clearly defined in the agreement. If a certain portion of work is left incomplete, ensure there's an agreement regarding retainage.

9

What compliances are required with local ordinances?

Be sure to ask the roofing contractor what's required in regards to local ordinances. You can contact the local building department for verification and ask whether a permit is included in the cost — and who's responsible for obtaining it.

10

How much of an inconvenience will it be to have my roof replaced?

Homeowners often wonder about the noise and preparation aspects of roof replacement. Most often, it'll take two to three days to replace shingles on a roof. While you can stay in your home, be prepared for noise. You'll also want to relocate any pets that typically stay in your yard. Also, be cognizant of work areas and move your car during construction hours to avoid any damage.

11

Will you remove my old roof?

Some roofers will claim to save time and money by shingling over your roof. By doing this, you're unable to identify whether you have rotten wood or soft spots beneath the shingles — causing more severe issues down the road. Quality roofing companies will conduct a thorough inspection and provide recommendations as what needs to be done.

12

Are you going to install drip edge when you install?

A drip edge (or edge metal) is a small piece of aluminum placed under the shingle where it comes off the roof. It extends past the roof, allowing for runoff to flow into the gutters. If a drip edge isn't installed, you may encounter drainage issues later on.

13

Will you use ladder stabilizers or standoffs to protect my gutters during installation?

The components of your project are important, but it's crucial to know the methods the roofing company is using to get onto the roof. Ladder stabilizers and/or standoffs should be used. Stabilizers rest on the roof, keeping the weight of the extension ladder off your gutters. Without this, you might be left with a torn guttering system.

14

Do you bring a container for refuse material? If so, where will you place it?

Out with the old and in with the new. The old materials will have to be placed somewhere. Ask the roofing contractor if they'll be providing a refuse container for the job site. Typically, you won't be required to supply it. Another thing to keep in mind is your driveway. Some asphalt surfaces can crack under extreme pressure so it's important to troubleshoot where the container will be placed.

15

What will you do in the case of inclement weather?

The weatherman isn't always right. There's always a chance for inclement weather and it's important for the roofing contractor to have a plan for protecting the interior of your home. Most likely, your roof will be covered with plastic sheeting or tarpaulin. Also, be sure to ask what their plan is if you run into several rainy days at a time. Will they be checking in periodically?



Having your roof replaced can be daunting.
But with the right roofing contractor, the
process will be a breeze.

For any questions regarding roof
replacement or to schedule a free
inspection, give us a call at (407) 295-7403.

