



## 5 Things to know before you Restyle your Kitchen

Most people share the same goals with any home improvement project and it is no different with a Kitchen Remodel. Quality workmanship and a fair price are two of the most common responses homeowners will give for their goals. A job finished on time comes in third, but a project that drags out for weeks or months is very annoying. So, how do you, the homeowner, take steps to make sure you get a high-quality job, on time, and at a fair price?

*You can start with the five things listed below.*

1. Make sure the company specializes in kitchens. The typical contractor will perform many different home improvement projects. Meaning, the contractor may be completing an addition to a home this month, next month it is a roofing job, and then maybe a deck. The best way to ensure quality is perform the same type of work every week.
2. Employee installers will provide you with quality workmanship and will go a long way with helping get the job completed on time. There is nothing worse than to be not shown by a subcontractor. Let's face it, the contractor doesn't control the subcontractors time or the workers associated with the sub-contractor. Employee installers are hired to work every day, and when one is sick, there should be back-up installers. Make sure you ask about the management structure of the contractor you hire. It is ok to ask; any reputable company will be proud to answer questions regarding its business.
3. A lump sum contract means the contractor is guaranteeing the project can be completed for an exact price. Kitchen remodeling is a relatively small project and a company that specializes in kitchen remodeling will have few surprises on the job. There is nothing worse than having the contractor quote a low price and then start adding fees on after the project is started. The price should be given up-front, well before starting the work.
4. Ask for the contractor to show proof of their professional insurance. A reputable company will show you proof without you having to ask. But, sometimes even the good ones forget. So, ask to see it! If it makes you feel more comfortable, you can ask to be added as an additionally insured to the company's policies. The fee can be as little as \$15, but this is a small price to know the company is covered, and so are you.
5. Make sure the company has a written labor warranty as well as the manufacturer's warranty. This is the oldest trick in the contractor's book. The homeowner asks about the warranty and the contractor says five years. There is a broken hinge or other issue and you call the contractor. You now learn that the labor only had a ninety-day warranty and it is not covered. And if you had multiple subcontractors, there may be labor fees for removal of each item, plumbing fixtures, cabinets, or countertops. So, you want to make sure that everything will be taken care of if there is an issue.