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How to Find a Good Contractor to Modify a Senior's Home

When it comes to making your senior loved one's home more accessible and safe, sometimes it requires the work of a professional. Whether you need a safety ramp or a completely remodeled bathroom, hiring a professional contractor can ensure that the job gets done correctly. However, finding a contractor takes more than a simple internet search.

Keep It Local

As far as finding a reliable [contractor](#), it is best to look close to home, using friends, family, and neighbors as your most trusted resource. Getting a referral from someone you know personally is a great start, but try to get at least three referrals, and cross-reference all referrals against other information sources before making your final decision. In essence, finding a trustworthy contractor requires you to complete a little bit of research and homework.

Start by first taking a look at the work the contractor completed for your referral, and ask questions about their experience working with the contractor. For example, was the contractor accommodating to their needs and easy to work with? Did the contractor complete work according to schedule and adjust well to any necessary changes implemented by the customer? Check out contractor reviews as well through the Better Business Bureau or review sites such

as Yelp. Look for complaints about the business or specific individual. However, keep in mind that even the best contractors may have some complaints, so look to see if the dispute was resolved and the contractor did everything in their power to right the situation and provide customer satisfaction.

The references you receive shouldn't just come from your personal acquaintances. A good [contractor](#) should have at least 20 references, and according to professional contractor Mike Holmes, you should call all of them. Ask about details such as if they cleaned up their mess or followed up a month later to make sure the work was still satisfactory. Ask about price as well and inquire about the accuracy of the estimate. Contacting former clients will give you a good idea of the quality of contractor's work, but you can take it a step further by contacting local suppliers. Suppliers can not only give you insight into the contractor, but provide you with other contractors they recommend as well.

Shop Around

As you conduct your search for the right contractor, avoid going with the first referral you receive. The contractor may have done excellent work for your neighbor, but [upon meeting](#) them, you may find that your personalities clash or that they don't answer your questions directly. Continue the shopping process by bringing in at least three contractors for an in-home, face-to-face estimate. Part of the hiring process involves finding the price that works for you, so you must gather enough knowledge to make an educated hiring decision so you can be sure that you are getting the best deal. By obtaining three [bids](#), you can get an idea of the general price range and identify any outliers. Using price as a consideration, you can then choose your contractor based on other important factors such as availability, communication, and flexibility.

Each bid you receive should include the start and completion dates, payment terms, cost of labor and materials, cost for pulled permits, proof of licensure, worker's compensation, liability insurance, and any other pertinent information or instructions you discussed with the contractor.

It is possible that as you search for a contractor to complete modifications to your loved one's home, you may determine that downsizing to a smaller, more accessible home is the first step in the modification process. [Downsizing](#) can reduce stress, as the home will be easier to maintain and keep organized, and there won't be any unused space such as the two spare bedrooms upstairs. Be sure to hire a moving company to take the stress out of moving for everyone. Read reviews and [get multiple quotes](#) before making a hire. Once you've downsized, you can then focus on home modifications, such as [installing railings](#) or [widening doorways](#) and hallways, and consider bringing in a contractor.

Finding the right contractor takes time and patience, but being armed with the right information makes the decision easier and ensures that you are bringing in the right person to get the job done. Take your time and make sure your loved one's needs are being met.