

# How to choose a contractor for domestic building work

Choosing the right contractor for your building work is one of the most important decisions you will make.

Generally, building work over the value of \$3,300 must be carried out by a QBCC-licensed contractor.

Some types of building work must be performed by a licensed contractor, regardless of the value of the work, including:

- Draining
- Plumbing and Drainage
- Gas Fitting
- Chemical Termite Management
- Fire Protection
- Completed Residential Building Inspection
- Building Design
- Site Classification
- Hydraulic services design (work up to \$1,100 can be done without a licence)

A contractor that holds a QBCC licence has met certain minimum requirements of technical merit and financial soundness.

Contractors carrying out asbestos removal or demolition work must hold a licence from Workplace Health and Safety Queensland.

Here are some steps to help you choose the right person for your work.

## 1. Make a list of local contractors you think can do your job

Take time to research your options:

- friends and family who have recently built or renovated are often a great source of honest referrals
- QBCC's "Find a Local Contractor" search facility on [www.qbcc.qld.gov.au](http://www.qbcc.qld.gov.au)
- advertisements
- industry associations, and
- display homes.

## 2. Check the contractor's licence

- Record details from the QBCC licence card (name, licence number, expiry date, licence class (e.g. Builder – Open))
- Check the contractor's licence with QBCC by calling us on 139 333, or using the Licence search part of our website

## 3. Get at least 3 quotes

Contact at least three licenced contractors and request a written quote. Make sure the quotes are for the same work requirements so that you can easily compare them later.



#### 4. Ask the contractor for the details of recent clients

It's reasonable for you to ask any contractor for details of similar work they've done in the past and for the contact details of recent clients. It's an effective way of getting an objective opinion of the contractor you're about to do business with.

The more information you can get about the contractor's past work, the easier it will be for you to choose the right contractor for your job.

#### 5. Select your contractor and get started!

Once you've selected a contractor:

- ask about, and obtain a copy of, any special warranties the contractor may provide
- obtain a copy of the contract and – before signing anything – seek legal advice on any point you don't understand
- make sure the contractor gives you a copy of a QBCC-approved Contract Information Statement
- remember there is a 'cooling-off' period of five business days where you may withdraw from the contract. But you're only allowed to withdraw if you did not receive formal legal advice before entering into the contract
- check that all details of your agreement with the contractor are included in the contract, including any changes ('variations') made after the contract is signed
- never pay the full price up front or too large a deposit, and don't pay progress payments in advance of work progress.

#### Need more information?

The QBCC booklet "Facts for homebuilders and renovators" provides useful information on the entire building process. Copies are available from any QBCC office or can be downloaded from [www.qbcc.qld.gov.au](http://www.qbcc.qld.gov.au), or call QBCC on 139 333.

This information is also brought to life on the Home Owner Building Guide with Tom Williams available on the QBCC YouTube channel.