

Bakersfield Painter



Finding the Best Painter

Questions you should ask

How to hire a painter

How to tell if they are qualified

How to find a good painter in the Bakersfield area

So you have decided it is time to bring in a professional to paint your home. Whether you are doing the inside or outside there are many things to consider when making this important decision.

Steps to finding a good painter:

- 1.) Check to make sure that they have a contractor's license.
- 2.) Get two or more references.
- 3.) Ask how long they have been in business.
- 4.) Get at least one other bid for the job to make sure they are not ripping you off.
- 5.) Find a painter that will give you pricing for small jobs over the phone.
- 6.) Get flat rate estimates so you know the total you will pay beforehand.



The best place to start asking about painters is your family and friends. Other good sources of referrals include contractors, real estate agents and your local paint supply store. Your city may even be able to provide a list of recommended painters who are familiar with the codes in your area. When asking for referrals, be sure to check the type of job the painter was called in to accomplish. Also, determine if the painter specializes in residential or commercial work.

Some good questions to ask:

Were you happy with the quality provided by the painting contractor?

Everybody has their own ideas of quality, so you should take a look at their house and judge for yourself. Pay attention to cut-in areas around doors, windows and trim. Are the lines straight and was caulking applied. Interior or exterior doesn't matter; proper surface preparation always leads to better, more pleasing results.

Did the painting contractor protect non-painted surfaces or areas?

For exteriors this includes concrete, roofing and plantings. For interiors moving and protecting furniture is a major concern but don't forget about the flooring. If a painter was sloppy with one customer chances are they will be sloppy with all of them. If you are left to clean up after your painter this will cost you more time and money and frustration.

Were they courteous and polite?

This is a very important consideration. The entire experience, from beginning to end, needs to be as stress free as possible. Plus if the house painter enjoys their job, the quality and attention to details will be better. The customer's attitude can and will affect the entire paint job. Hopefully this will be the first question you ask. If the answer to this question is "no" then do not go any further, you don't want to work with that person.

Is the warranty included?

If a warranty was included find out if it has a reasonable amount of time before expiring, 3 years is enough, and if it has any value. Simply stating a warranty isn't enough. Get it in writing and understand its limitations! A good painter is happy to stand behind his warranty. Good painters use quality materials and know their level of expertise. If a painter will not offer a warranty this is a problem in my mind.

How to Hire a Painter

Think about the last time you purchased a car. Chances are you didn't go to the yellow pages, choose a dealership at random, and buy your car from the first lot you visited. Many times, though, this scenario describes the way homeowners find a painter -- they look in the phone book and call the painter with the largest ad or the first one listed. But much like purchasing a car, finding a qualified painter requires research and comparison shopping.

Ask Questions

HOW DO THEY PLAN TO PREPARE THE SURFACE FOR PAINTING?

Proper prep work is the key to a long lasting paint job. Make sure your contractor has a clear plan for washing, scraping, and sanding the surface.

WILL THEY PRIME BEFORE CAULKING AND PAINTING?

All bare surfaces require a primer; previously painted surfaces usually do not require primer.

WHAT AREAS ARE THEY PLANNING TO CAULK?

The most common cause of paint failure is due to moisture from water going behind the paint. For that reason caulking all joints, seams, gaps, and cracks in the surface is a must to ensure a tight seal.

WHAT KIND OF PAINT DO THEY PLAN TO USE? WHAT ARE YOUR OPTIONS?

Good quality paint will be recommended by good painters, you probably don't need the most expensive product, but don't cheap out on this either. Make sure the painter can explain the benefits of the paint they are recommending and ask for documentation of any manufacturer's warranty info and product data.

Ask For a Quote

Invite painters to look at the job and ask for a quote in writing. In the quote also ask them to specify the time it will take to complete the job. It sucks to try and live in a house that is covered with drape cloths. Make sure the contractors are quoting on the same specifications - areas to be painted, number of coats and so forth.

Execute a Contract

Execute a contract specifying the work to be done, total cost, payment schedule, start date and estimated completion date. Make sure the contract includes the paint brands and colors to be used in each location, as well as the number of coats. Make sure the contract specifies that the painter is responsible for cleanup and the removal of paint from all surfaces (windows, floors).

Things to Look For in a Qualified Painter

There are a number of qualifications that can set a professional painter apart.

- Insurance -- Be sure that the prospective painter you are considering is fully insured, having both workers' compensation and liability insurance. Your selected painter should be able to provide you with a copy of his or her insurance policy.
- Better Business Bureau -- Contact your local Better Business Bureau to ascertain if any complaints have been filed against your potential candidate.
- Use Angies List www.AngiesList.com to see what others have to say about this person. If a painter has good reviews on Angies List then it is a good bet they will do good work for you too.

Safety Commitment

Accidents can happen with almost any home improvement project. So ask your prospective candidate what steps he or she will take to prevent injuries and property damage. Again if a painter is good at his work he or she will be able to answer this question with ease. They have

Clean Up

Ask the painter how he or she intends to leave the work area once the job is completed. You don't want to be cleaning up after a painter for hours after they've left your home. Also, ask about disruption during the project.

TIPS

- * Small business painters will be much more affordable because their overhead is lower.
- * If it's a big job, ask a number of painters and discard the cheapest and most expensive options. The cheapest will have underestimated and will sting you for it later and the most expensive doesn't really want your business, probably because they have work up to their eyeballs already.