

How to Choose a Handyman

Both adults working full schedules. Long commutes to work. Weekends spent at soccer, Little League or maybe the golf course. It all adds up to fewer hours at home and an ever growing "to do" list. Americans are more pressed for time now than ever before.



Surveys show that a typical household has an average of twenty-two items on the "to-do" list at any given time. These chores can often range from finicky fluorescent lights,

to toilets that don't flush properly or repairing damaged drywall, all requiring different skills and tools. Homeowners may not have the time, the inclination or the skills necessary to tackle most of these kinds of problems, and advice from huge home improvement stores can be overwhelming. Contractors are often reluctant to come out for smaller jobs; too often they simply don't show up at all.

Hiring a professional handyman service is the solution that will save homeowners time, money and frustration. A handyman service can handle all the items on your list with just one phone call. Homeowners shouldn't have to spend hours playing phone tag to schedule a parade of plumbers, electricians and carpenters. One phone call to a professional handyman service will schedule a visit from a technician who is skilled in a broad range of areas, including

carpentry, minor electrical work, and plumbing repair.

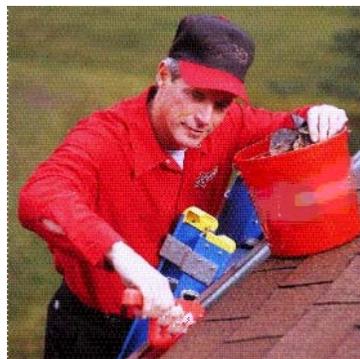
Hiring a professional handyman service insures the job is done right. Professionals have the proper tools and skills to complete the tasks quickly, efficiently and properly. Using a service as opposed to an independent person provides a much greater level of reliability.

A handyman service provides more flexibility for scheduling and a higher level of accountability for its employees. A service will also back all work with a satisfaction guarantee. You don't want to use an individual who could "disappear" by not returning your phone calls.



Fifteen points to consider:

1. Be sure that the company's technicians are carefully screened before they are hired, including drug screening and criminal background checks. They should wear photo identification. This person will be in your home and you want to feel safe and secure.
2. Avoid services that subcontract their work. These services may often lack quality control and consistency.



3. Be sure the handyman service you choose has the appropriate insurance, and their employees are bonded. Ask to see a current certificate of insurance.

4. Ask for references and contact them. Ask if the service has done work for people in your neighborhood.

5. A high quality handyman service will provide exceptional customer service. You should be able to speak with a person who is courteous *and* knowledgeable when you call, not simply leave messages on a machine. A reputable handyman service will follow up with you after your handyman has completed his work, to be sure the work was done to your satisfaction.

6. The customer service staff should go over all of the fees carefully with you, and offer to provide you with a written copy. There should be no hidden charges, and certainly no surprises.

7. Your handyman should always present a professional appearance including a neat, clean uniform. He should never smell of smoke.

8. Choose a service that will guarantee their work.

9. A professionally run service will provide their employees with the necessary supplies to do a variety of jobs without wasting time running out to hardware stores for basic items.

10. A reputable handyman service should only charge you

while your handyman is working for you. You should not have to pay a charge to have someone simply show up, or for the time to drive to your home.

11. Choose a company that specializes in residential (and commercial for your business) repair and maintenance. You should never run the risk of being "bumped" for a bigger job.

12. Your handyman service should provide you with a specific, confirmed appointment, and then follow through on the schedule.

13. Employees must be able to communicate well. Sometimes your job might not be what you think, and it's important to be able to problem-solve to a solution together.

14. Your handyman should respect your home. He should always work efficiently but carefully and clean up after the job is completed.

15. And finally, use a company that has connections to the community. Is it a member of the Better Business Bureau? What types of local business and community organizations does it belong to?



With a little preparation and research up front you can have the maintenance and repair jobs around your home or business completed by a professional you can trust and rely on, not only now, but for years to come.