

Three Ways to Find a Reputable Contractor — Fast

When you're prepping your home to be listed, finding a reputable contractor for needed repairs or improvements is essential. That can be a challenge — especially when you're in a hurry. So, how do you find the best contractor in a pinch? Consider these tips:

1. **Tap your network.** Ask around. Amongst your neighbours, family, or friends, there's bound to be someone who can give you a name. Plus, if the contractor comes already recommended, there's a better chance that you'll be happy with the work.
2. **Use trusted apps.** There are many online platforms and apps that offer to connect you, quickly, to a qualified contractor. Many carefully vet contractors before they can be listed, giving you added peace of mind. Be sure to check reviews.
3. **Industry professionals.** Professionals in the "home" industry often know the best people. Try to get a recommendation from one of them.



And, don't forget the obvious. Call a contractor you've worked with before, even if it was several years ago. Since you're already a client, there's a greater chance they'll get back to you right away.



Easing the Moving Concerns of Young Minds

Moving can be challenging for children. Changes are filled with uncertainty, and they are likely to fear the unknown. Engaging in thoughtful dialogue about the upcoming move can significantly ease their concerns.

- **Acknowledge feelings.** Children need to feel heard. So, acknowledge their fears about leaving behind friends or a beloved home. Validating their emotions can be a significant step toward helping them feel better.
- **Remind them of what won't change.** Emphasize the aspects of their lives that will stay the same: toys, books, bedtime routines, etc. Assure them that the family unit will remain a constant, permanent team.
- **Get them involved.** Get kids active in the moving process. That gives them a sense of control. For example, let them pack a box of their favourite things or choose a new decoration for their room.
- **Familiarize with fun.** Turn learning about the new neighbourhood into an adventure. Explore parks, schools, and other attractions through photos or, if possible, a visit. This will give them things to look forward to.
- **Create a countdown.** A visual countdown to moving day can prepare children for the transition. Marking off the days can make the move feel more predictable and less sudden.

The most important thing is to talk with your kids about the move. That will not only help them, but also make the overall moving process go more smoothly.

Beware the Allure of “Bargain Hunting” for a New Home

Everyone loves a bargain. That's why stores advertise sales every week. But, when it comes to shopping for a new home, looking for a bargain comes with several pitfalls.

First of all, a low price tag (compared to similar properties in a neighbourhood) may indicate a multitude of issues. For example, the home may have several needed repairs, structural problems, missing roofing shingles or HVAC equipment that require replacement soon. These can quickly transform your “bargain” home into a money pit.

That said, low-priced homes that need work can also be an opportunity. Just be sure you know what you're getting into and are prepared to invest in needed repairs and upgrades.

Another downside to “bargain home shopping” is missing opportunities to buy a home that is ideal for you. The fact is, the majority of properties sell for at or near their current market values. So, there are a significant number of listings you could potentially miss. You stand a better chance of getting into a home you'll love at a fair market price than you do finding one that's a low-cost deal.

And when you do focus on bargain shopping, you might have to sacrifice some of the items on your new home wish list. For example, if you're hoping for a stunning front window view and a spacious kitchen with an island, all at a below-market price, your chances will be slim.



Finally, bargain-priced homes are often found in less desirable locations. If the area is important to you, it's worth asking yourself: “Should I risk waiting until a bargain-priced home comes up in this neighbourhood? After all, that might never happen.”

The bottom line: A much better approach is to create a list of the kind of home you want, find out the current selling prices for those types of properties and then, if those homes fit your budget, start shopping!