

Before You Meet with Contractors

Research Phase

Gather 3-5 local roofing companies with strong reputations

Verify each company has been in business for 3+ years

Check BBB ratings and read reviews on multiple platforms

Ask neighbors and friends for personal referrals

Note companies that advertise locally vs. out-of-area "storm chasers"

Contractor Credentials Verification

For EACH company you're considering verify the information.

- Valid state roofing license (verify online): _____
 - General liability insurance (minimum \$1M): _____
 - Workers' compensation insurance: _____
 - Local physical address (not P.O. box): _____
 - Permanent local phone number: _____
 - Willing to provide 2-3 recent customer references
 - Manufacturer certifications (GAF, CertainTeed, etc.): _____
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Estimate Review Checklist

A proper estimate MUST include the following items.

Company Information:

- Full legal business name
- Address, phone, email
- License number clearly displayed

Materials Specification:

- Shingle brand, line, color: _____
- Shingle type (3-tab, architectural, premium): _____
- Wind rating (Class F = 110mph minimum): _____
- Algae resistance warranty: Yes/No
- Underlayment type (15# felt vs. synthetic): _____
- Ice & water shield areas specified: _____
- Ventilation system details: _____
- Flashing materials (aluminum, galvanized, copper): _____
- Drip edge included: Yes/No

Work Scope Details:

- Tear-off method described
- Decking inspection process
- Decking replacement cost per sheet:
\$ _____
- Number of layers to be removed:

- Cleanup and debris removal included
- Landscaping protection mentioned
- Start and completion dates: _____
- Work hour schedule: _____

Pricing Transparency:

- Itemized materials cost: \$ _____
- Itemized labor cost: \$ _____
- Permit fees (who pays?): \$ _____
- Dump/disposal fees: \$ _____
- Sales tax (if applicable): \$ _____
- Contingency for unforeseen issues:
\$ _____
- Total price: \$ _____
- Payment schedule (never 100%
upfront):
- Deposit: _____%
- Progress payment: _____%
- Final payment: _____%

Warranty Documentation:

- Manufacturer warranty length: _____ years
- Workmanship warranty length: _____ years
- Warranty transferable to new owners: Yes/No
- Warranty exclusions clearly stated
- Warranty claims process explained

Red Flag Detection

WARNING SIGNS - If you see these, reconsider immediately.

- Contractor appears unsolicited after a storm
- High-pressure "today only" pricing
- Requests cash payment or large upfront deposit
- Unable or unwilling to provide license/insurance proof
- Out-of-state license plates on vehicles
- Uses only a cell phone with out-of-area code
- "Your insurance will cover everything" promise
- Asks you to sign an Assignment of Benefits (AOB) form
- Vague or handwritten estimate
- Unmarked vehicles or no company branding
- Cannot provide local references
- Offers to pay your deductible (illegal in most states)

Side-by-Side Comparison Chart

Use this grid to compare your top 3 estimates.

| Criteria | Company A | Company B | Company C |
|-----------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Company Name | | | |
| Total Price | | | |
| Deposit Required | | | |
| Project Timeline | | | |
| Shingle Brand/Type | | | |
| Manufacturer Warranty | | | |
| Workmanship Warranty | | | |
| Payment Schedule | | | |
| License Verified | | | |
| Local References | | | |
| BBB Rating | | | |
| Years in Business | | | |

Questions to Ask Every Contractor

During the estimate process, ask these questions.

- *"Are your workers employees or subcontractors?"*
- *"Who will be the project supervisor?"*
- *"How many projects do you have scheduled before mine?"*
- *"What happens if you find rotten decking?"*
- *"How will you protect my landscaping?"*
- *"What time will your crew arrive and leave each day?"*
- *"Do you pull the permit or do I?"*
- *"What's your process for handling unexpected weather delays?"*
- *"Can I see a sample contract before I decide?"*

Final Decision Checklist

Before signing ANY contract review these project tasks.

- I have at least 3 detailed estimates
- All licenses and insurance are verified
- I've checked references and called them
- I understand the payment schedule
- I've reviewed the warranty documents
- All promises are in writing in the contract
- No blank spaces exist in the contract
- Start and completion dates are specified
- Cleanup procedures are detailed
- I feel comfortable with my choice
- I'm not being pressured to sign quickly

Post-Project Verification

After work is completed review these tasks.

- Final inspection passed with city/county
- All debris removed from property
- Gutters cleaned of nails and debris
- Walked roof with contractor (if safe)
- Received manufacturer warranty paperwork
- Received contractor workmanship warranty
- Received lien waiver (proof of payment to suppliers)
- Made final payment only after complete satisfaction
- Photos taken of completed work
- Left honest review for contractor

Important Reminders

1. The cheapest estimate often costs more in the long run
2. Never pay 100% upfront - legitimate contractors don't require this
3. Your insurance company is YOUR advocate - stay involved in claims
4. Trust your instincts - if something feels wrong, it probably is
5. Everything in writing - verbal promises aren't enforceable

This checklist provided by:

Skye Roofing

561 Midway Rd, Medford, OR 97501

(541) 200-5269 :: <https://skyerroofing>

Family-owned and serving Southern Oregon :: CCB #199716

Keep this checklist for your records and refer to it throughout your roofing project.