



CONSUMER RATINGS

7th Step to Buying New Windows



“Get a Written Contract”... You have evaluated your existing windows and decided to replace them. Consumer Ratings recommends taking 7 simple steps to make your purchase easier and more satisfying. This article explores the Final Step of the process of buying replacement windows for your home or business...

7 Steps to New Windows

- 1) Visit a Local Showroom
- 2) Ask for References
- 3) Schedule an In-home Appointment
- 4) Ask for Energy Star Ratings
- 5) Ask for Design Pressure Ratings
- 6) Ask to see the Warranty
- 7) **Get a Written Contract**

Step 7 – Get a Written Contract

In this article we explore the 7th Step in the process of buying replacement windows for your home or business – getting a written contract. Your list of potential contractors and window product choices is shorter because you have taken the first 6 steps:

1. Visited showrooms and selected only contractors you feel comfortable having work on your home
2. Asked for, received and checked local references
3. Scheduled In-Home appointments with your short list of replacement window specialists
4. Received Energy Star Ratings to Compare Pricing based upon energy savings potential
5. Received DP Ratings to Compare Pricing based upon resistance to air infiltration, water penetration, resistance to forced entry and overall structural strength
6. Reviewed the actual warranty coverage for your windows and know what is covered and by whom

Now, it is finally time to get a written contract for this very important project...

Get a Written Contract:

Once you have agreed on the model, brand, style and options for your window replacement project it is time to get the exact price for that specific window and options you selected along with the installation methods and any interior or exterior trim written up as a contract.

Custom windows can take six to eight weeks from the time they are ordered until they are installed. It could be easy to forget what your original agreement was if it is not in writing and you may not receive all you thought you agreed upon if your agreement is not thoroughly spelled out in writing.

Your written contract should thoroughly explain in full detail all of the various aspects of this project you have reviewed during discussions with your potential contractor, including:

- Window brand, model, style and quantity
- Energy Star Ratings for each window model and style selected
- DP Ratings for each window model and style selected
- Warranty Coverage
- Design options included, such as window color, hardware and divided lites
- Installation methods including:
 - Insulation for window perimeter
 - Interior and exterior trim included
 - Fasteners and sealants to be used
 - Installation Schedule

Having a thorough written contract can give you the ability to make a legal claim for damages if your agreement is not strictly adhered to by your installation company.

Get a copy of the window contract document you sign!

Make sure you receive an exact copy of the document you sign to avoid conflicts or confusion about what is included at the time of installation.

Consumer Tip:

Follow the “7 Steps to New Windows” when selecting a window replacement product and installation company for the best chance of getting the best results for this very important project.