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## Builders ... they're not all rogues!

How do I know if a builder is reliable? Contractors go to great lengths to demonstrate their skill, expertise and reliability. Are they members of trade bodies or trade Institutions? Do they come with recommendations from Architects or other home owners? Never be afraid to ask for references or proof of membership to trade bodies.

How do you know if a quote is reliable? Write down a works specification or schedule. Once you have done this, invite at least three contractors or tradesmen to price it. By getting three comparative prices you are protecting yourself against rogue quotes. If one quote is ridiculously cheap or expensive, but two others are roughly the same, then this is a good indication that a quote is wrong.

Before the Contractor starts, make sure you have a written agreement. What should this agreement contain? You need to establish the following : Cost, Duration, Quality, Access, Site setup, percentage of retention, when to pay and signatures from both parties. And always remember, never pay in advance!

As a client, try not to change your mind half way through a project. Never rush a project, or design it as you go. If a project does change, ask the contractor to explain the cost difference up front. Never let him add the price on at the end.

Lastly, what should you do if your relationship with your contractor breaks down. Organise a meeting with him and discuss your grievance. For the most part, most disagreements result through poor communication. Try to pre-empt this by holding regular meetings during your project. If this doesn't work then seek advice from professionals.

**buildservices.co.uk** can help to advise on the appointment of builders. To book a free design consultation just call 0800 644 0135, or alternatively you can email us on [info@buildservices.co.uk](mailto:info@buildservices.co.uk).



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