DMV Home Remodeling Contractor Checklist

Use this checklist to evaluate and compare contractors for your project

Contractor Name: _____ Date: _____

1. LICENSING & INSURANCE

- ☐ Holds valid license for my jurisdiction (check all that apply):
  - ☐ *MD (MHIC)* ☐ *VA (Class A/B/C)* ☐ *DC (DCRA)*
- ☐ Provided proof of license (not just license number)
- ☐ Carries general liability insurance
  - *MD requires minimum $500,000*
- ☐ Carries workers' compensation insurance
- ☐ Willing to provide certificate of insurance

2. EXPERIENCE & PORTFOLIO

- ☐ Has completed projects similar to mine
- ☐ Portfolio matches my design style/preferences
- ☐ Experience working in my specific area/neighborhood
- ☐ Familiar with local building codes and permit process
- ☐ Years in business: _____
  - *Longer track record provides more references to verify*
- ☐ Member of professional organizations (NKBA, NARI, etc.)

3. REFERENCES & REPUTATION

- ☐ Provided at least 3 client references
- ☐ I called references and received positive feedback
- ☐ Reference feedback notes:
  - *Budget: ☐ On ☐ Over | Timeline: ☐ On ☐ Delayed | Communication: ☐ Good ☐ Poor*
- ☐ Checked online reviews (Houzz, Google, Angi, BBB)
- ☐ No unresolved complaints with BBB or licensing board
- ☐ Visited a completed project (if possible)

4. COMMUNICATION & PROCESS

- ☐ Responsive to initial inquiry (within 24-48 hours)
- ☐ Showed up on time for consultation
- ☐ Listened to my ideas and concerns

- ☐ Explained their process clearly
- ☐ Identified a dedicated point of contact for my project
- ☐ Explained how they handle permits and inspections
- ☐ Described their change order process
- ☐ Uses project management tools for updates/communication

5. ESTIMATE & CONTRACT

- ☐ Provided detailed written estimate
- ☐ Estimate includes itemized breakdown (labor, materials, fees)
- ☐ Payment schedule is reasonable (not large sum upfront)
- ☐ Contract includes:
  - ☐ *Scope* ☐ *Timeline* ☐ *Payment schedule* ☐ *Change order process* ☐ *Warranty*
- ☐ Warranty terms are clear (workmanship + manufacturer)
- ☐ Contractor obtains all permits (not homeowner)
- ☐ Asked questions about anything unclear in the contract

6. TYPE OF CONTRACTOR (circle one)

- ☐ Design-Build Firm: Best for complex renovations, whole-house projects, major remodels
  Integrated design + construction under one team
- ☐ General Contractor: Best for straightforward projects with existing plans
  Focuses on construction; may work from your architect's drawings

CONTRACTOR COMPARISON

Factor	Contractor 1	Contractor 2	Contractor 3
Licensed & Insured			
Relevant Experience			
References Check Out			
Communication Quality			
Estimate Amount	$	$	$
Timeline Estimate			
Gut Feeling (1-5)			