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Choosing a Concrete Contractor

Your home or business is probably the largest investment you'll ever make. The condition of your existing concrete and concrete coatings can significantly impact the value of that investment. Just as you would only purchase a vehicle or wedding ring from an authorized and reputable dealer, you shouldn't settle for anything less than an experienced and professional concrete contractor.

Be an informed consumer and don't take shortcuts. Doing research beforehand can save you a lot of money later. Protect your investment by following this checklist before hiring a contractor:

- Obtain References
- Confirm current California Contractor License
- Make sure the contractor knows the building codes
- Ask for proof of insurance coverage
- Determine the contractor's level of experience
- Check the contractor's knowledge of materials
- Obtain a written estimate
- Be mindful of low-priced estimates
- Get a written contract

A quick look at a concrete coating contractor's web site should tell you whether they perform the kind of work you're looking for. GS Concrete Coatings prides itself on having an informative and detailed site that describes the company's many capabilities.

A web presence is standard operating procedure in virtually all industries. If a contractor does not have a web site, it may suggest the business is ephemeral, unlicensed, or both. Additionally, your concrete coatings contractor should conduct him or herself professionally, showing up for appointments and returning phone calls promptly.

Check References.

It's imperative to ask for a list of referrals. References should be for projects similar to your own. GS Concrete Coatings routinely supplies a list of references from satisfied customers in all of Southern California, including Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego and Ventura counties. To make sure that you're dealing with a reputable concrete contractor, check with the [Better Business Bureau](#) to find out if any complaints have been filed against the contractor. Unlike many other online review sites, BBB's complaints are thoroughly vetted before being posted online.

Always hire a currently licensed California Contractor.

In California, all contracting jobs over \$500 require a contractor's license. For your own piece of mind, make sure that a contractor's license is in good standing by visiting the [California Contractors' License Board's](#) web site. Contractors are required to display their license number in all advertising – print and online. Reputable contractors such as [GS Concrete Coatings](#) prominently display their license number on their web site. Hiring a licensed contractor will pay dividends for your home and business in terms of workmanship and protecting your investment. GS Concrete Coatings is dual-licensed in both concrete resurfacing and pouring, as well as plastering.

Knowledge of local building codes is very important

A reputable contractor should be familiar with the building codes in your county or municipality. Any violations of those codes may result in fines or cause concrete work to have to be redone, leading to additional expense. GS Concrete Coatings is well versed in building codes and will assist in pulling permits when necessary.

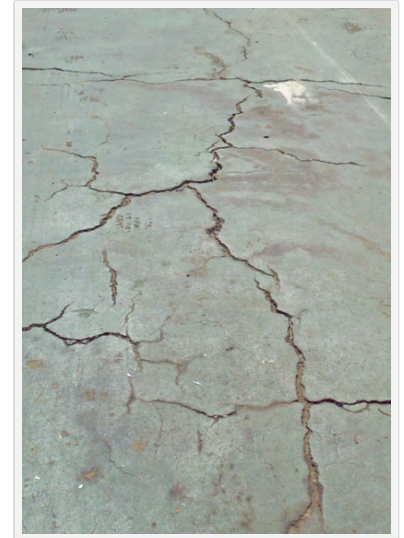
Proof of insurance coverage

All contractors licensed in California must have adequate insurance. Contractors working without insurance can be fined and may have their contractor's license suspended or even revoked. [GS Concrete Coatings](#) meets all state requirements by carrying comprehensive liability and workmen's compensation insurance. The company's Certificate of Liability is available for customer inspection.

Experience counts

Find out how long your prospective contractor has been in business. Ask what percentage of his business involves concrete installation. A concrete specialist such as GS Concrete Coatings is always the best choice, since this type of work requires a high level of artisanship and expertise and is unlikely to be performed well by a contractor who only does it occasionally.

[GS Concrete Coatings](#) has almost 30 years of experience in the construction industry, with particular expertise in the specialty plaster and concrete coating trades. The company has worked closely with many designers and architects and formed long-term customer relationships with a wide variety of property owners.



Check the contractor's knowledge of materials.

Make sure the contractor knows which materials are appropriate for your project. He should be able to offer you alternatives at various prices, and explain the advantages and disadvantages of each. Find out if your contractor has been trained and certified by the manufacturers of the products they plan to use in your project.

GS Concrete Coatings has been trained and certified by the following material suppliers/manufacturers: Pli-Dek, Variance, Armourcoat, ArcusStone, Vero, Westcoat, Modello and TexSton.

The company has even provided training worldwide for many different manufacturers' products, including:

- Venetian Italian plasters
- Limestone plaster
- Concrete coatings
- Waterproof deck systems

Get a written estimate.

In evaluating an estimate, make sure that it details the project scope, along with the total cost of the project and the time frame for its completion. Ask about any items in the estimate that you don't understand. You have the right to know what you're paying for. Make sure the project's time frame meets your expectations. Contractors who can complete the job faster without sacrificing quality may charge more. Take this into account if you need the project completed more quickly. Generally speaking, the cost of contractor-grade material is higher than consumer-grade, so cutting corners on material is not advised.

The estimate should also detail whatever warranties the contractor offers. A reputable professional contractor always stands behind his work. GS Concrete Coatings always provides customers with free written estimates that include warranties.

Be mindful of cost-cutting.

When comparing estimates, never make your choice based on price alone. Extremely low bidders will cut corners and use poor quality materials. Absent any overhead, you may have trouble contacting them again should your work require touch up or maintenance.

In concrete contracting, you often "get what you pay for." Do yourself a favor by not basing your choice of a contractor just on price, but instead on getting the best value and performance for your money.

Get a written contract.

Once you've made a decision, it's vital to get everything in writing. Never make a deal with just a handshake and a verbal agreement.

The contract should include everything covered in the estimate. It should clearly detail the steps taken from beginning to end of your job, along with the payment schedule and timeline for the completion of the project. It should also state the total cost of your project and specify the conditions that would cause it to increase—such as if you, the customer, decide to change the size, scope or nature of the project.

Signing the contract means that you agree to its terms, so take the time to read it carefully, to avoid any misunderstandings.

Better Safe than Sorry

A concrete project for your home or business is a major commitment of time and money. In choosing **GS Concrete Coatings**, you can be assured your job will go smoothly and will meet your expectations. With GS, you can be confident of getting the best value and the highest quality workmanship in Southern California for your concrete coatings or Venetian plaster project.