



# Home Improvement Madison.com

## Home Improvement Contractors: Select the Right 'Tool' for Your Job

The term Home Improvement means different things to different people. It ranges from a landscape upgrade to new windows, a new roof or creating new living space. In each case, just as with an individual project, using the right tool for the job makes it easier, faster and more efficient.

### Who Does What?

If you've never done it before, selecting the right professional can be daunting. Who does what in the world of Home Improvement?

### Consider a few options:

- **General Contractors, Building Companies** — These are usually the bigger players. Their business is geared toward large projects but they regularly take on smaller ones. In today's economy, smaller, basic Home Improvements are often looked upon favorably by General Contractors as a means of keeping employees busy. A big plus in favor of a General Contractor is that they have the resources to oversee nearly any home improvement.
- **Specialty Contractors** — As the name implies, this group focuses on doing a specific job. These professionals offer a blend of experience, skill and project management. You'll find a variety of professionals specializing in areas including bathrooms, kitchens, flooring, landscaping, sunrooms, basements, custom garages and garage doors, windows, siding, roofing and landscape hardscapes and water features, just to name a few. Because they are specialists, their staff is highly trained and experienced.
- **Skilled Trade Professionals** — This group includes professionals that often require licensing and certifications. They are highly trained in very specific skills. Among them are plumbers, electricians, heating and air conditioning technicians, tile experts and irrigation specialists. While extremely focused on their aspect of a job, they require overall project management, scheduling, etc. if theirs is just a part of the remodeling project.
- **Service, Installation Specialists** — The skilled workers that do the painting, install drywall, put up gutters, repair and install concrete, patch a roof or improve a wet basement. Their tasks are very specific and they are called upon to do one thing and do it well.

### What do you need, what do you want?

The size and scope of your Home Improvement plan dictates which of these categories best fits. As does the amount of daily interaction you're willing to have – do you want to oversee the project and schedule people and resources? Or, do you want to step away until the project is done? Creating a detailed outline of what you hope to accomplish, what kind of budget you have and how much time you're willing to invest is the first step. Complete that and selecting the right Home Improvement specialist is much easier.

For additional information contact the professionals found on [HomeImprovementMadison.com](http://HomeImprovementMadison.com), or check out these resources:

- **NARI** (National Association of the Remodeling Industry) of Madison
- **MABA** (Madison Area Builders Assn.)
- **HOUZZ** – a national platform to bring homeowners and remodeling professionals together to share ideas and insights