

HOW TO PICK A WINDOW TINT COMPANY



This document a series of helpful information:

1. **GUIDE:** Helpful tips to find the right window film company
2. **CHECKLIST:** Document to help you keep track of everything during your project
3. **RESOURCES:** Lists of website and other helpful resources

Any kind of home improvement project or commercial project can be very stressful. Make it less stressful by choosing your contractor carefully. The key to success is knowing as much as you can about the contractor and products to be installed in your home or business.

When looking for a window film installation contractor, all the rules apply when seeking a standard contractor. Actually, it is important that you make sure the window film contractor you choose is up to the task. Window film may seem like a simple service like getting your windows cleaned, but there are some key facts to know about selecting the right window film installation company.

First off, it's important to understand a few **KEY POINTS** about window film. There are many window film products available, so it's important to keep these in mind:

- **MAKE sure the company is actually authorized to sell the window film product.** Reputable window film manufacturers such as 3M, Llumar, Vista, Huper Optik and Hanita Coatings all require the use of dealers to install their products.

WHY? This is important because you want to make sure you get the proper warranty for your window film project, not only for the window film installed but also for any window warranty if applicable.

- **BEFORE you even start calling contractors, check with the Better Business Bureau (BBB) in your area.** See if there are any unresolved complaints with a given contractor. Choose one that has no record of complaints, or one where the complaint was resolved to the consumer's satisfaction.

WHY? Be aware that a new contractor or one that changed his legal name to dodge complaints may not have any record of complaints with the BBB, so it is important to follow all of these steps.

- **CALL contractors that pass the BBB test and get bids.** Be sure to give the job details the same way with each contractor so you won't be comparing "apples and oranges". Get a list of references, of recently completed jobs the contractor has done that are similar to yours.

WHY? The window film industry has a low cost of entry business model. This means a lot of companies come and go very quickly. Also, because most companies are inexperienced and could lead to poor workmanship and problems later on down the road.

- **MAKE sure you know all the facts.** The window film is not as complicated as a kitchen remodel, but it's important to know all the facts. Make sure all the details are discussed with you beforehand. Things such as window film

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warranty, window warranties, seal failures and thermal cracks are all phrases the contractor should be discussing on the initial sales call.

WHY? Certain window film products should not be installed on certain windows, and it is important that the window film installation company has knowledge of this and a full understanding of both residential and commercial windows.

- **SELECT the best bid.** The best bid is not always the lowest as the quality of materials may differ. Examine the proposals carefully.

WHY? It may be tempting to go with the lowest price bid but ask yourself why is this company the lowest, especially if the dollar difference is substantial. Make sure that all bids are for the same product and the same scope of work. If the materials are different, make sure you understand the quality of materials and their respective warranties.

- **VERIFY that the contractor you choose is licensed.** Probably the most important step. In the state of California, window film companies are required to have a D-52 contractor license, be bonded and insured. This means for any job over \$500 or more for combined material and labor costs a contractor must hold a valid license.

WHY? Be advised that unlicensed individuals pose a risk to you and your family's financial security if a worker is injured while on your property, your property is damaged, or if the work is incomplete and/or faulty. Few, if any, unlicensed individuals have a bond or workers' compensation insurance. The quality of their work usually doesn't compare to that of a licensed contractor. Don't take the chance in order to save a few dollars. You'll probably end up paying more in the long run.

- **READ the contract carefully.** Make sure that the contractor has liability insurance and that his employees are covered with workman's compensation. Ask questions about anything you don't understand, and don't be shy about asking for changes to the contract. You are the customer.

WHY? Make sure the contract lists specifics of your job. List brand names of supplies, type and quantity of items to be installed, etc. Will your contractor do the all the work or subcontract with somebody else? Include cleanup and debris removal in the contract. Note any follow-up or guarantees the contract provides. NOTE: Window film is a less complicated project so the contract may be simple, this is okay, just as long as there is one.

- **OBTAIN a liability of insurance certificate made out in your name.** Insurance companies give these out on a regular basis. Do not be timid to ask for it. It is the only sure proof of insurance no matter what is written on the truck!

WHY? Just because a company says they are insured does not mean they actually are. Make sure the insurance is up to date and know what the company is insured for. Also, if the company has employees make sure they have workman's compensation insurance.

- **ONCE you are satisfied with the contract, sign it and give the contractor his deposit by check.** If you decide to give a cash deposit, be sure to get a receipt.

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WHY? On many projects there is no need to give a deposit. In any case, do not let the company ask for more than 10% of the project total if you are a residential project. Commercial projects may require special terms and deposits depending on size and scope of work to be completed. The only exception is for customized material which a contractor cannot return.

- **GET the warranty from the window film installation company.** If you were promised a warranty (almost all window films come with some kind of warranty) make sure you get a copy of it.

WHY? Be cautious of warranties that say "SAMPLE". This is fine for the initial sales process, but after completion of the work you should get a copy of the paid invoice and notified when to expect the warranty from the window film manufacturer, usually in the mail 30-45 days later. If that time period has passed and no warranty has arrived get in touch with the window film installation company ASAP. It is imperative the window film installation company turns in your information to the manufacturer to guarantee an enforce warranty.

Hopefully these simple steps will make your window film project less stressful. It helps to be armed with all the facts to make sure your window film investment is actually an investment and not a problem later on.

THE CHECKLIST

Attached is a simple checklist sheet, this is meant to help you keep everything organized and easy reference for your window film project.

Have more questions? Feel free to contact ClimatePro™ anytime at 1-800-479-6292

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GUIDE: Window Film Project Checklist

This simple checklist is meant to help you keep everything organized during the initial start of your window film project. Use this worksheet to keep track of all the important information relevant to your project.

STAGE 1 DATE: _____ LOCATIONS: _____

	Company #1	Company #2	Company #3
Company Name Phone: Website:	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
Product:			
Better Business Rating:			
Warranty:			
Contractor License: Active?:	_____ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	_____ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	_____ <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Contract w/ Estimate?:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Bid Totals:	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
Additional Notes:			

STAGE 2 (Time to narrow down the bidders and select the best option for your project.)

After receiving all the bids, rank the companies for first choice to last based upon several factors;

1. Price (*this should be last but is almost always top priority*)
2. Comfort level with sales person and company history
3. Ability for company to handle your project
4. Product included in the bid

	PICK THE WINNER	DEPOSIT GIVEN	WARRANTY RECEIVED
COMPANY #1 _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____	Date: _____
COMPANY #2 _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____	Date: _____
COMPANY #3 _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ _____	Date: _____

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GUIDE: Window Film Project Resources

Window Film Manufacturer Websites

Use can use the below website to do your own research about window films. Some of the follow websites have dealer locators which can help you quickly identify if a company is authorized to sell a specific product. For the websites that don't there are contact numbers so you can call the manufacturer to verify.

3M Window Films http://solutions.3m.com/wps/portal/3M/en_US/Window_Film/Solutions/
LLumar Window Films <http://www.llumar.com/en/Default.aspx>
Vista Window Films <http://www.vistafilms.com/en/default.aspx>
Hanitatek Coatings <http://www.hanitatek.com/> (800) 6605559
Solar Guard <http://www.solargard.com/> (877) 273 436
Panorama <http://solargard.com/windowfilms/residential/panoramafilms> (877) 273 4363
Madico <http://www.madico.com/> U.S. (800) 4564331

Better Business Bureau Website

Better Business Bureau <http://www.bbb.org/>

California State Contractor License Board

Below is a link for the state of California, all other states please check with your local contracting laws to determine if window film companies are required to be license and/or registered with the state.

California State License Board -
<https://www2.cslb.ca.gov/OnlineServices/CheckLicensell/CheckLicense.aspx>