

STEP 3 ESSENTIAL POINTS TO INCLUDE IN YOUR CONTRACT FOR A **HAPPY** REMODELING EXPERIENCE

A contract is a legally binding agreement between you and the contractor that promises an action. Your bid document will usually become your contract once it is signed. It should spell out the full scope of the project. This is the time to nitpick and scrutinize the document and ask questions about anything you are unsure of. It is so much easier to resolve issues if they are agreed in writing upfront. Don't be afraid to add to the contract. Don't rely on the contractor to include everything but do ask him if he thinks anything else should be included to ensure that the job can be successfully completed.

Key information that should be included:

•	Contractor's name, address and contact information
•	Name of the contact person who will oversee the project
•	License number, proof of licensing and insurance and what the insurance covers. All subcontractors must have their own workers' compensation and liability insurance or be covered by the main contractor
•	Full scope of work
•	Total cost of project with individual pricing for agreed items
•	Itemized list of materials, with specific brands noted if requested. If the contractor is willing to give you the itemized price as well, so much the better
•	A clause that allows you to purchase and provide material yourself if the contractor needs to substitute an item, or you do not like what the contractor selects or the price he is offering
•	A clause that states that the client and the designer will sign and approve certain agreed materials (e.g. kitchen counter top, hardwood flooring, paint color) before installation by the contractor
•	Warranties for the project and the products used
•	Timetable for starting and completion
•	Responsibility for obtaining building permits
•	Payment schedule that should be based on work progress rather than time and date
•	Penalties for missed deadlines
•	Process for making changes once the project begins
•	A "broom clause" to cover demolition and cleanup provisions