

BUYERS GUIDE

9 Things You Need to Know Before Buying a New Vinyl Patio Cover, Fence or Deck

Buying and installing a new fence can be a hefty investment and a major renovation on the property. Before taking the dive, you need to consider a few things.

1. CSLB

The [Contractors State License Board](http://www.cslb.ca.gov) is a government body that educates and protects consumers dealing with the construction industry. Among their responsibilities is the administering of exams, issuing licenses and investigating consumer complaints. You can go to the CSLB to learn if your contractor has the latest certifications, licenses or complaints about their services. For more information, visit:

<https://www2.cslb.ca.gov/onlineservices/CheckLicenseII/checklicense.aspx>

<http://www.cslb.ca.gov/Consumers/HireAContractor/FindingTheRightContractor.asp>

<http://www.cslb.ca.gov/GeneralInformation/About/BasicFactsAboutCslb.asp>

2. Product Brand

Vinyl Fences and Patio Covers should be built to last. There are many vinyl manufacturers who produce extrusions for the industry, both imported and domestic. The qualities of these products vary widely. Choose a vendor who has experience in the industry, and who works with industry leading manufacturers. Vendors should offer a variety of quality materials and competitive pricing. A good contractor will help you determine the best fence or patio cover for your needs.



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3. Vendor Affiliations

Reputable companies have affiliations with industry leaders like the [American Fence Association](#) the Vinyl Manufacturers Association and the [Better Business Bureau](#). These organizations exist to maintain a healthy positive reputation for their industry and keep consumers from getting ripped off.

4. Insurance and Workers Compensation

have current general liability, vehicle, and workers compensation insurance. Ask them for proof signed by the insurance company representative – it is called an ACORD form. This protects you as much as it does the contractor. No contractor should be working on your home if they are not insured to cover any accidents that may occur during the project. This includes both property damage and bodily injury. It is helpful to work with companies who carry excess insurance as that usually indicates they work with large organizations like government agencies and large homeowners associations.

5. No Subcontractors

Subcontractors may be brought in to work on a project. This could mean someone you've never seen could end up installing your fence – someone with no background or drug checks. Avoid this. Make sure your contractor's employees are doing the work. With subcontractors, responsibility can be passed around when something goes wrong. Main contractor, secondary contractor, subcontractor can all point at each other.



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6. Trained and Certified Installers

Anyone doing work on your property should be fully trained and knowledgeable in their field's latest technology. Installers should have years of experience in the field so your job is done right. Unfortunately, you run the risk of getting a poor quality installation if the installer is not properly trained or appropriately vetted by the right organizations, and their work may not be guaranteed.

7. Experience

A good contractor has a wealth of experience and study and should have a solid reputation and be ready to prove it. Look for examples of work. Many can provide a list of satisfied customers that will recommend them. If they cannot, that is a warning sign. Go online and look for reviews and comments about the installer. Check unbiased third party review sites like [Yelp](#) and [Angies List](#)

8. Showroom and physical locations

Do they have a showroom or office that you can visit? Can you get in touch with someone during normal working hours? This is important for many reasons – if you are unhappy, you can talk to people either on the phone or in person to get results. It is no fun being unhappy with the work and not able to get in touch with someone.

9. In House Fabrication

A top quality company fabricates their products in house. This helps to insure the product is made to fit your project, and is not cut or adjusted or made in the field to work. Many companies order premade products from a wholesale company and cut and adjust them in the field.



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The Vinyl Concepts Promise...

With almost 30 years in the business, we strive for honesty and integrity in our projects. It's about hard work and customer service from first contact until you are 100% satisfied.

1. *Our staff cares about getting your project right.*
2. *We make your home improvement dreams a reality.*
3. *We will provide the finest service and quality product.*
4. *We will respect you and your ideas.*

Feel free to go ahead and give Richard Stull a call. He's company president and wants to share our pride in serving the Los Angeles, Ventura, Orange and Santa Barbara areas. (Click on any location for a map and driving directions.) Or drop by. Richard will be happy to see you!



Rated in the top 5% of contractors in the nation by Angie's List.



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